

in them to be as active as that soul was whose p  
are nay they do preserve as in a vial the purest  
extraction of that living Intellect that bred them

*Prof RAMESHWAR SHARMA*  
*Principal & Controller*

## *PART I*

### THE LAST VICEROY

CEROY DESIGNATE  
BATES AND BRIEFINGS  
IE FIRST WEEK  
ANDHI AND JINNAH  
IE GOVERNORS AND THE PLAN  
ONTIER VISIT  
RISIS AT SIMLA  
HE PLAN REDRAFTED  
HE GREAT ACCEPTANCE  
ADMINISTRATIVE CONSEQUENCES  
O STAY OR NOT TO STAY  
NSTRUMENT OF ACCESSION  
NDEPENDENCE DAYS

## *PART II*

### THE FIRST GOVERNOR GENERAL

AR OF SUCCESSION  
SPONSE TO EMERGENCY  
ADOW OF JUNAGADH  
TAKING OF THE OATH

attempt my final analysis of them. From my particular vantage point I feel the cause of analysis is best served if the atmosphere in which we lived is first recapitulated and the principles we formed the pot are duly perpetuated. If this is hurried breathless narration then the beauty of the work done at the highest pressure and with a acute sense of urgency. If it appears disjointed that is because of problems demanding immediate solution cut across continuity to be omitted by omission.

Lord Mountbatten's method of doing large high powered stuff under the direction of the staff in the original and general. For every hour of discussion with the Indian leaders he allowed a quarter of an hour for discussion before seeing the next. For the Chief of the Intelligence Section were distributed to all the key members of the Staff. He obtained our advice and did his thinking aloud to the daily Staff Meetings which we all attended already knowing every day that had passed the past day and information reviewed the day before. This is how it will be found that on cases I had no difficulty in negotiating with Lord Mountbatten and thought that my engagement when was not necessarily there myself.

In spite of the pace the setbacks and distractions the transfer of power by the British was steadily achieved according to schedule. With a twenty-four day of our arrival the Partition Plan had been announced further seventy-two days later that and the 'ceremony' itself was at an end. Throughout Mountbatten's tenure as Governor General the tempo never substantially slackened. All the immensities and self-sustaining concentration of effort that I believe better brought out by maintaining as far as possible the hierarchical quality rather than in the selection of staff at an official special time. I have therefore simply divided the work into its two national parts though ordered before and after the 5th August—Independence Day. Within that framework the material is as I have already said in effect daily pages.

I mentioned to Mr. V. P. Menon and Captain R. V. Brocknan R. N. both former colleagues on Lord Mountbatten's staff in India and to Mr. A. H. Joyce Officer in Charge of Information to the Commonwealth Relations Office for reading though my literary narrative is typescript, to Mr. K. St. Pavlovitch for checking references, and I told but not told to my wife for her accuracy during the long and often late hours of dictation typing and proof reading.

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ALAN CAMPBELL-JOHNSON

Westminster  
July 1951





## PROLOGUE

It may be said of the British Raj as Shakespeare said of the Thane of Cawdor Nothing in his life became him like the leaving it This Bill is a moral to all future generations it is a Treaty of Peace without a War

Such was Lord Samuel's considered tribute paid during the House of Lords debate on the Indian Independence Act, to the creation by compromise and consent of two new nations involving one fifth of the entire human race

It was certainly the privilege of a life time to be given the chance as a member of Lord Mountbatten's staff of playing some personal part in this unique transfer of power

In announcing to Parliament on 20th February 1947 Lord Mountbatten's appointment as Viceroy Mr Attlee stated that he would be entrusted with the task of transferring to Indian hands the responsibility for the government of British India in a manner that will best ensure the future happiness and prosperity of India

But Mr Attlee then added that there was to be a time limit for achieving agreement if possible and for transferring power in any case by June 1948—the principle no doubt being that a time limit would induce the necessary margin of agreement between the two great Indian political parties the Congress and Moslem League as nothing else had so far succeeded in doing

In spite of the immediate controversy it provoked this time limit was in effect the logical conclusion of the policy decision of the British Government early in the war to cease recruitment for the Indian Civil Service The normal complement of that Service was never much more than eleven hundred by November 1946 it had fallen to five hundred and twenty British officers in senior positions with the remainder Indians In 1939 the Central Government Secretariat was run on the basis of approximately thirty senior administrative officers but by the end of the war the number of officers of equivalent grade had risen to three hundred

The same situation was developing in the Provinces This tremendous bureaucratic growth of work coinciding with the decline in the number of British senior officials made it clear quite apart from other considerations that it was going to be virtually impossible to hold on to India administratively beyond 1947 It is doubtful whether the police establishment was strong enough to enforce any policy opposed by both major communities It is fair to say that any large military commitments to maintain the Raj would have been wholly unworkable for the British Government or people

The original schedule Lord Mountbatten set himself was to produce a plan by October 1947 discuss it with the British Government and put it to the Indian Leader by about January 1948. While he was still at home this approach was so much too hurried but he had hastily set foot in India when he reached the firm conclusion that it was in fact much too leisurely to meet the situation then confronting us. We were faced by rapidly rising Hindu Moslem tensions. Direct Action had been launched by the Moslem League in August 1946 there were riots and reprisals for riot. This set off the panic and disturbances of great intensity in Calcutta in Bengal and Bihar. The trouble spread to Lahore and the Northwest Frontier Province. In his first talks with Lord Mountbatten the Moslem League leader Mr Jinnah gave frank warning that unless an acceptable political solution was reached very quickly he could not guarantee the continuity of the Union from his side. A similar warning was given by Congress leaders.

Although it was still officially in being the so-called Cabinet Mission Plan negotiated throughout 1946 had already broken down. This was the last attempt to achieve a unitary system for India and it was based on an elaborate three-tiered structure of Provinces, districts and Panchayats. Groups A comprised the present Dominion of India while Groups B and C conceded the existence of West and East Pakistan respectively but all three Groups were to support a weak central authority. The Grand Design broke down as many had deduced from details—vital details certainly—but a significant warning for Lord Mountbatten about the nature of the Indian deadlock and how to handle it. It seemed that the Indian approach was to start with no overall agreement and work steadily away from it while the British approach was to tackle the difficulties first and hope to be left with some common ground at the end.

Unity had been our greatest legislative and administrative achievement in India but by March 1947 the only alternatives were Pakistan or chaos. Lord Jinnah likened the position to taking the edge of a ship and setting a fire on the deck and swimming in the hold. Lord Mountbatten discovered from personal discussions with the Leaders of the Moslem League that they would not partition the country at all and fight a civil war rather than accept transfer of power to a Hindu majority Union while Congress showed themselves champions of unity but not the price of coercion. By the same time they insisted that no non-Muslim majority community should go against its will into Pakistan. He decided that within ten days would raise no fundamental objection to partition. After seven or three days of diplomacy by discussion and negotiation parallel to the concentration of will and intensity of effort on the part of Lord Mountbatten the 3rd June Plan was in principle accepted.

The Plan had three main features. First it was partition with partition. The Punjab and Bengal the communal composition of which were almost equal were given the right to decide on their own partition prior to option for India or Pakistan. Mr Jinnah while stressing the tragedy of this step was also unable to resist its logic. For some time there was possibility of Bengal separatism expressing itself but this died away as the transfer of power drew near. As a result of this partition West and East Pakistan were divided by some eight hundred miles. Secondly it involved the partition of the Sikhs this was the outcome of the partition of the Punjab upon which the Sikh leaders insisted. Lord Mountbatten was surprised at the vehemence of their attitude in view of the price they would have to pay for it but was given no practicable alternative by them.

The third main feature was Dominion Status. This was a master stroke on many grounds but in particular because it made possible the maximum administrative and constitutional continuity on the basis of the great India Act of 1935. As Lord Mountbatten himself said shortly after his return to England. I know of no other country in the world to day in the fortunate position of having a constitution that is already a working constitution but which can be amended by a stroke of the pen day by day to be made to work more agreeably to themselves.

So much for the Plan let us turn now to some of the major consequences of the partition of British India.

First of all it meant in effect an administrative within a political transfer of power. Action was at once taken to meet the demand for the partition of the magnificent Indian Army. A Supreme Command gave higher direction until its disbandment in November to this complex and delicate task. A Joint Defence Council meeting alternately in India and Pakistan with Lord Mountbatten acting as chairman on behalf of both Governments enabled steady contact on major military problems to be maintained right up to Lord Mountbatten's departure. It also provided a safety valve at more than one moment of crisis for private consideration of all outstanding inter Dominion disputes. A Partition Council was formed to deal with all civil issues including transfer of assets and endless technicalities involved in partition. Finally an Arbitration Tribunal was appointed to give awards when agreement by other means had failed. Considering the range of the controversy involved these instruments of partition worked with remarkable speed and administrative smoothness.

Provision was made in the Act on Mr Jinnah's suggestion for Lord Mountbatten to be Governor General of both Dominions and for some time it seemed as if this might be but at the last moment Mr Jinnah decided otherwise. No he was in the best position to judge but in so far as the majority of physical assets it was arguable that

joint Governor Generalship might have been in the best interests of Pakistan.

The second major consequence was, of course the violent communal reactions in the Punjab. In terms of the geography and population of India a high proportion of the population was concentrated in a limited but vital area. The people rose up against the leaders' acceptance of partition. In this communal rupture in the mill Hindu Sikh and Moslem were involved and migration from one mill to another people began overnight in an area the size of Wales. A far greater catastrophe was avoided only by an almost miraculous absence of large-scale famine and disease. If a column of refugees stretching for more than sixty miles across the Punjab road the families carrying all their worldly goods in bullock-carts. There had been many communal migrations before but none of the magnitude. Moreover this time there would be no return.

For Pakistan the immediate danger to the key Province of the West Punjab. They were seeing impoverished Moslems in place of wealthy Sikhs. For India the direct threat was to Delhi which was right in the epicentre of this earthquake. Before long some five hundred thousand refugees were moving on the capital bringing in their wake suffering and bitterness. It was by her heroic efforts in organising relief for the refugees that Lady Mountbatten made her name immortal in India. Her dynamic but human personality combined with her unique Red Cross and St. John experience helped greatly to build up the moral and improve the conditions of the displaced in the crowded refugee camps.

Within three weeks of Independence Day the Prime Minister Pandit Nehru, and Deputy Prime Minister Patel with great political courage invited Lord Mountbatten now constitutional Governor-General to come down from Simla and take over the chairmanship of the Emergency Committee of the Cabinet. It assumed full war powers, and Government House itself became a permanent headquarters. The Cabinet would meet there each morning and go into the Prime Minister's Room. Here the movements of the refugees and outbreaks of disturbances were pinpointed on wall charts. As the days went by it became evident that the situation was being held along the boundary of the East Punjab and United Provinces through the firm action taken both by the Punjab and Central Government to halt refugee movement. If the Government had shown weakness at this point the trouble might well have spread across the whole of Northern India.

It may be asked whether all possible precautions were taken to meet this crisis, or whether something was left undone. In trying to answer this question I would suggest that the following considerations should be borne in mind.

Once the Leaders had accepted Partition it became impossible to maintain for very long the Interim Congress Moslem League Coalition Government in Delhi. It was only with the utmost difficulty that this Government had been set up in 1946 and held together subsequently. Ever since March the Punjab had been administered on an emergency basis under Section 93 of the Government of India Act but it was quite out of the question for the Central Government to function under that regulation as well. After 3rd June the Interim Government fell apart each side wanted to take control of their respective sovereign States and they could have been deflected only at the cost of the overthrow of the Partition Plan. Transfer of power in the last analysis was an unconditional act.

As a precaution against trouble following upon the Award of Sir Cyril Radcliffe who with the agreement of both Governments had been invited to draw the actual boundary lines for the Punjab Bengal and Sylhet there was the largest concentration of troops ever known in the Punjab. In fact a special Boundary Force was set up in the area directly affected. The task was found however to be quite beyond its resources and by October command had to be handed back to the two new Governments.

In the dispersal of forces before 15th August Independence Day provision had to be made to meet the hardly less tense situation in Bengal and Calcutta. But here a completely different

Third Force was to succeed in keeping the peace. It would have been impossible to have foreseen the miracle of Gandhi's moral influence and wanton to have relied upon it in advance of the event. I have heard an expert estimate that the situation in the Punjab could have been restored only with double the amount of troops in fact employed (which would have meant some eight divisions) and even then only on the assumption that they were all communally reliable.

Then there was the form taken by the Sikh rising. The operations were mostly carried out by small groups with cleverly planned mobile attacks on trains and villages. It was in fact a rank and file revolt and any action to arrest the wilder Sikh leaders—seriously considered at the time but rejected—would have been more likely to have touched off or intensified the disorder than to have brought it under control. The Punjab troubles must be regarded as a cataclysm but in the context of India as a whole they were in fact limited to three per cent of the population and were hardly comparable as a human tragedy to the Bengal famine of 1943. Finally it should be remembered that Partition did not cause the communal crisis but that the communal-crisis was the cause of Partition.

One of the major consequences of Partition was its effect on the position of the Indian Princely States. Five hundred and sixty five of them in all ranging from Princes of States as large as

European nations to India did continue to live with and across  
they ruled over a third of the Indian continent in an area and  
quarter of the population. They stood on the British India  
being in the state of a high British Empire. Thus the term Viceroy was  
status and function of Governor-General of British India and  
Crown Representative of the United States. They might  
well have been a formidable factor in the future but when we  
arrived in India in March 1947 we found the process distracted  
and fatally weakened by great internal divisions. On 5th July  
after prolonged efforts to achieve a meeting of proposals among  
them Lord Mountbatten spoke to them in the Chamber of Princes  
for the first time in his capacity as Crown Representative. He  
took the initiative in drawing them all to accede to one or other  
of the two new Dominions. The result was a success of a low  
the British Raj.

The basic principle of Accession was that it was left to the  
personal decision of the Ruler. The Indian National Congress  
was recognised that the decision should be qualified by the  
geographical integrity of the State. The Congress or Dominion  
the common composition of the State and a principle of necessity  
to ascertain the will of the people. Lord Mountbatten met  
with a remarkable meeting of the Princes. He had with him  
a hundred and sixty-five States. He had succeeded by 14th August  
They had recognised the force of the argument that the princely  
mediation was the rightest chance for survival in a rapidly  
changing world that the protection of British paramountcy was  
no longer a practical source of authority but that it was a  
two pillars they could make a constitutional contribution to the political  
and social identity of the two new nations.

The construction of the term 'Princely States' and 'Princely  
(Sardar Patel the Deputy Prime Minister) who became the first  
Minister in charge of relations with the States must be acknowl-  
edged. For acceptance of the principle of the Princes at all meant  
on the part of Congress a major reversal of long-established policy  
and a decision of the importance provided by a easy target.

Accession was to be followed closely by the Major policy  
Severely great Princely blocs were formed. Of special importance  
were the Union of the States of Orissa, Malwa (which included  
Gwalior and Indore), Coorg (in the group) and some two  
hundred Princely States under the leadership of the Jam Sahib of  
Bikaner) and the Phulkari Union of the 140 Sikh Princely States.  
One consequence of the settlement with the States was an ap-  
proach suggested strongly by Mountbatten by the new Indian  
Government to individual Princely States and political and diplo-  
matic duties outside the State boundaries. A ruling Prince was  
appointed Governor of Madhya Pradesh and another became one of  
India's delegates to the United Nations. It has been a bloodless

revolution and a political achievement of the first magnitude largely lost sight of abroad on account of more lurid and dramatic news among which must be counted events in those three States who failed to accede by 15th August

There was first of all the case of Junagadh. This was not of primary importance in itself but significant for the precedents it set. Junagadh was a small State of some five thousand square miles with a Moslem ruler who finally acceded to Pakistan. By his action the twin principles of geographical contiguity and communal majority inherent in Accession were both violated. After various complicated negotiations India took over the State and a plebiscite confirmed popular acceptance of this action.

Junagadh was a mere curtain raiser to the complex problem posed by the delayed accession of Kashmir. Lord Mountbatten himself had visited Kashmir in June and armed with an assurance from Sardar Patel on the Indian side strongly advised that any decision taken prior to 15th August would be acceptable to both successor States. The Maharaja however chose to ignore this opportunity and only acceded to India on 26th October when confronted by large scale tribal invasion coming largely from the North west Frontier Province of Pakistan. Here was a Hindu ruler with a State geographically contiguous to both Dominions and the majority of his subjects Moslem. Kashmir's accession was rendered more complicated still by further special factors.

There was a powerful Kashmir States Congress movement led by Sheikh Abdullah a Moslem Congressman of forceful personality and national status in India. Moreover Nehru himself descended from Kashmiri Brahmins and Sheikh Abdullah are not only political colleagues but also close personal friends.

But from the military viewpoint Kashmir is an area of great strategic importance to both countries. Pakistan has inherited the burden of the North west Frontier and a major conflict of interest between the two Governments along this line could gravely undermine the security—already strained by the partition of the Indian Army—of the entire sub continent. It was soon clear that the Kashmir commitment would involve a dangerous drain of manpower and money and a distraction of effort going beyond the margin of safety or the dictates of prudence. For India in particular it means the deployment of her military strength to the maximum disadvantage along tenuous lines of communication and on a front where superiority of numbers and armour can rarely be exploited.

Finally there was the appeal to the United Nations by India at the peak of the crisis in December 1947 which has given the dispute an international status. There is no easy solution to Kashmir. In one sense it symbolises the general clash of sentiment and interest which made Partition inevitable. It may well be that there was inherent in any settlement of the general Con



gress Muslim League conflict one outstanding and insoluble dispute. When the formula was the Cabinet Mission Plan to Assam in the spring of 1947 it seemed from the emphasis placed upon it by both Gandhi and Jinnah that it would be the North West Frontier Province. At the rim of the wheel and the clash might well have centred round Bengal or Calcutta. Moreover both sides are sustained by fervent and not unfounded belief in the strength of their cause—Pakistan relying more on natural justice and economic necessity and India more on legal right and political morality.

The third and perhaps most important State of all to stand on the Accession was Hyderabad. This was a special case with a Muslim Prince (direct descendant of the Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb) and a small Muslim oligarchy. The governing caste the State geographically in the heart of India and the subjects eighty per cent Hindu. In the case of the Nizam special Lord Mountbatten although now constitutionally Governor General was empowered to carry on negotiations for a Standstill Agreement with him beyond 14th August. But perhaps because of developments in Junagadh and Kashmir or expectation of support from opinion abroad or from some inner compulsion the Nizam tried to stall and play for time.

At the end of October a duly accredited delegation including his Prime Minister and his constitutional adviser Sir Walter Monckton accepted the substance of the Standstill Agreement and returned to Hyderabad to recommend the Nizam's signature to the Legislative Council formally approved. The Nizam then excused himself from signing for a few hours and during which time members of the delegation decided to return to Delhi where surrounded at their homes and subjected to physical intimidation by the Muslim extremist party the Hindu and Muslim men. When they saw the Nizam in the morning they found that he had changed his mind and they duly resigned. The Nizam is the knowledge that he had already secured the maximum concession from the Government of India then boldly proposed a new delegation consisting entirely of Hindu members.

After this bizarre episode it was so much for Lord Mountbatten's diplomatic reserves that he was obliged to keep the negotiations alive at all. But he prevailed upon the Government of India to receive the new delegation in London and that they would not support the claim for a glocester and Northamptonshire reported back to the Nizam with precisely the same terms before. The time he signed the Hindu Government of India's executive in the process.

There followed moral and physical ill-effects of the Standstill Agreement which was a day's reprieve and a final settlement. Hyderabad sponsored anti-semitic acts to display her attitude as an

independent nation. A loan was offered to Pakistan and State Congress leaders were imprisoned without trial. But most provocative was the activity of Kasim Razvi, head of the Ittehad ul Muslimeen Party and of the Razakars embryo storm troopers. I met Razvi when I visited the Nizam on Lord Mountbatten's behalf in May 1948. I can only describe him as expressing the most violent race hatred I had encountered in anyone since a meeting I had with Forster the Danzig Nazi just before the war.

On the Indian side there was an undoubted blockade of the State which included the stopping even of medical supplies. Most of this obstruction seemed to be organised at Provincial levels but while the Central Government did not authorise it neither did they succeed in bringing it effectively to an end. Then there was Communist intervention which was designed to embarrass and confuse both sides.

Britain never recognised Hyderabad's title to independence and in a famous letter to the present Nizam in 1926 Lord Reading laid down that Britain's relationship was one of undoubted Paramountcy. It was unreasonable to expect that the successor Power consisting of Hyderabad's kith and kin, should now concede what the British Raj had so consistently refused. Right up to the eve of his departure it seemed that Lord Mountbatten might find a formula to cover Hyderabad's final relations with India but unhappily it was not to be. Three months after he left a military demonstration and occupation was provided to clinch the argument.

Some of the Indian diplomacy on the spot was undoubtedly clumsy and the presentation of their case throughout was generally deplorable. India has been severely criticised for forcing the pace but it has to be remembered that in giving the Nizam more time they would also have been allowing Razvi and his fanatical movement fresh scope. Indian intervention effectively checked the spread of communal violence and has insured political consolidation throughout South India.

The Nizam with his love of diplomatic finesse left himself just enough margin to save his dynasty. As the leading Prince in India his great mistake had been retirement into his State as a result of the clash with Lord Reading in 1926 and complete withdrawal from central affairs thereafter. From his isolation he failed in 1947 to recognise the meaning of Partition which inevitably involved the setting up of two strong Central Governments instead of one weak one.

The transfer of power was an unique response essentially to a revolutionary situation. It is usual for revolutions to get out of control and defy the calculations of those who lead them. Lord Mountbatten's greatest achievement lay in producing a union which had about it sufficient substance and support to the storm of the immediate revolutionary crisis and to



munal sentiment in Bengal came as a blow to the Communists who had concentrated most of their effort in the industrial slums of Calcutta and had directed their propaganda strongly against the division of India.

After the transfer of power Communist effort seemed to move from Bengal to the South. There was a big conference of Communists from South-east Asia under Indian leadership early in 1948 in which there were signs of the usual deviationist troubles. Communism is likely to provide a dangerous threat to the Congress just so long as there is extensive misery to exploit.

While Pakistan has derived its inspiration from providing a Moslem homeland the Indian Union has aimed at creating loyalty to a secular democracy. With some forty million Moslems left after Partition on the Indian side of the border not to mention eight million Christians, six million Sikhs and other smaller communities India is certainly something more than a Hindu State. Gandhi himself was to become a martyr in the cause of Hindu Moslem solidarity.

The Indian constitution which was under active preparation and discussion during Lord Mountbatten's term of office is a synthesis of the great Western charters of liberty. The obvious hiatus between the vision of this document and the realities of Indian life does not destroy the validity of the vision. It represents a great tribute to the liberalising influence of British thought and is a fundamental attack upon the aims and aspirations of communalism. The Indian constitution offers fresh hope for the eighty million Untouchables who under purely Hindu dogma were pariahs polluting food with their shadow but are now Indian citizens with equal rights before the law. It is significant that one of the principal personalities in Nehru's Government and as such a prominent personality in the preparation and sponsorship of the Constitution is Dr Ambedkar the well known leader of the Untouchables.

Economically Pakistan in spite of the initial disasters quickly showed herself to be a viable State with the supreme asset of a solvent agricultural economy. There was a surplus both of food and jute in the first Pakistan budget. India however was soon suffering from inflation and in response to the Gandhian ethic rather than on grounds of strict economic justification from the altogether too rapid removal of controls over basic commodities. The controls had to be clamped on again but the operation was difficult and the damage had been done.

It is perhaps in the psychological field that the greatest revolution of all has occurred. In advance of any final definitions of Commonwealth membership Indo British relations under Lord Mountbatten's imaginative leadership had already improved beyond all expectations. Those of us who took part in the Independence celebrations were eye witnesses of what must surely be one



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munal sentiment in Bengal came as a blow to the Communists who had concentrated most of their effort in the industrial slums of Calcutta and had directed their propaganda strongly against the division of India.

After the transfer of power Communist effort seemed to move from Bengal to the South. There was a big conference of Communists from South-east Asia under Indian leadership early in 1948 in which there were signs of the usual deviationist troubles. Communism is likely to provide a dangerous threat to the Congress just so long as there is extensive misery to exploit.

While Pakistan has derived its inspiration from providing a Moslem homeland the Indian Union has aimed at creating loyalty to a secular democracy. With some forty million Moslems left after Partition on the Indian side of the border not to mention eight million Christians six million Sikhs and other smaller communities India is certainly something more than a Hindu State. Gandhi himself was to become a martyr in the cause of Hindu Moslem solidarity.

The Indian constitution which was under active preparation and discussion during Lord Mountbatten's term of office is a synthesis of the great Western charters of liberty. The obvious hiatus between the vision of this document and the realities of Indian life does not destroy the validity of the vision. It represents a great tribute to the liberalising influence of British thought and is a fundamental attack upon the aims and aspirations of communalism. The Indian constitution offers fresh hope for the eighty million Untouchables who under purely Hindu dogma were pariahs polluting food with their shadow but are now Indian citizens with equal rights before the law. It is significant that one of the principal personalities in Nehru's Government and as such a prominent personality in the preparation and sponsorship of the Constitution is Dr Ambedkar the well known leader of the Untouchables.

Economically Pakistan in spite of the initial disasters quickly showed herself to be a viable State with the supreme asset of a solvent agricultural economy. There was a surplus both of food and jute in the first Pakistan budget. India however was soon suffering from inflation and in response to the Gandhian ethic rather than on grounds of strict economic justification from the altogether too rapid removal of controls over basic commodities. The controls had to be clamped on again but the operation was difficult and the damage had been done.

It is perhaps in the psychological field that the greatest revolution of all has occurred. In advance of any final definitions of Commonwealth membership Indo British relations under Lord Mountbatten's imaginative leadership had already improved beyond all expectations. Those of us who took part in the Independence celebrations were eye witnesses of what  
be one



of the great reconciliation of history. The subordinate status had become hateful to be reasserted.

Both Britain and India, as Nehru pointed out, are essentially democratic nations. We are now friends and equals and we should be wiser than fools if we ever allowed dissent to creep in again. For the implication of this passage of good will reaches out beyond the reckoning of our century and age. It is a transformation that augurs well for the future progress and solidarity of the world.

*Part I*

THE LAST VICEROY



## VICEROY DESIGNATE

LONDON Thursday 19th December 1946

I CALLED EARLY on Mountbatten at his home in Chester Street and arrived in time for the customary Mountbatten breakfast—last minute dictation toast and tea all competing for the services of his mouth. As usual the meal came off second best. He had asked me to go round and see him about his South-east Asia Command Despatches. As erstwhile Recorder and keeper of his war Diaries throughout his tour of duty as Supreme Commander I retain an almost *ex officio* now no more than honorary interest in these Despatches. There are many teething troubles in their production not the least of which is to fit them into his crowded agenda. As our business was not finished and time pressed there was as usual no alternative but to accompany him to his next appointment—a sitting for an official portrait Oswald Birley is painting of him.

When we got into the car he pulled up all the windows swore me to the utmost secrecy and whispered that what he was about to tell me was known to no one outside his own family. Mr Attlee he said had called for him the previous evening and invited him to succeed Lord Wavell as Viceroy of India. Although I had become accustomed to associate him with surprises I was wholly unprepared for this *denouement*. All was fairly set for him to fulfil his long thwarted personal ambition of resuming his career in the Navy. His refresher course was in full swing. He was to be Rear Admiral commanding the First Cruiser Squadron with effect from April 1947. Moreover the recent conference in London between the Indian Leaders Lord Wavell and the British Government while giving no grounds for any easy optimism seemed to imply that the Cabinet Mission Plan was still in being.

From what I now heard the Prime Minister had put a very different complexion both on India's and Mountbatten's future. Mr Attlee had begun the interview by asking Mountbatten whether his heart was really set on going to sea. He replied that it certainly was. By being put back into circulation with his own Service his whole Naval career was being saved. He added that he had been both surprised and touched at the number of letters he had received from his friends in the Navy expressing their pleasure that he was going back to sea again.

Attlee then switched the conversation to the Indian. Wavell he said had come back with nothing more than a military evacuation plan. The Government was

favorably impressed with the political trend affecting both the Congress and the Moslem League. If we were not very careful we might well find ourselves handing India over not simply to civil war but to political movements of a distinctly totalitarian character. Urgent action was needed to break the deadlock and the principal members of the Cabinet had reached the conclusion that a new personal approach was perhaps the only hope. They had looked round in every direction for a suitable man to make it and had unanimously agreed that it was Mountbatten alone who had the personality and qualifications required.

At this point Mountbatten intervened. "You must at once make it clear from what he had said of the Indian situation when he was Supreme Commander and from his many talks with Wallis that he had entirely agreed with Wallis's policy prior to his last talk in Delhi in June. There was nothing that Wallis had done through that time which he would have done himself. Attlee agreed that fundamentally it was not Wallis's general policy in the past that was in question but its implementation to day. The hard fact was that despite his unmitigated efforts it had largely broken down, and Attlee reiterated that in this existing situation the problem was now more of personality. They agreed for closer personal contacts with the Indian Leaders as a paramount.

Mountbatten told me that he put a stiff fight against the Prime Minister's previous blandishment tiring him extremely tired and then folly of carrying him out too young and of diverting him from his Service career where perhaps his most likely usefulness to the State lay. Wallis there mentioned that What about Auchinleck? He was immensely popular in India. The interview ended it seems on the note of decision. Mountbatten wished to know just what Government policy he would be required to implement and he told me that before making any answer he must in any case consult the King since a Viceroy was not only theoretically his servant and subordinate but as far as the Indian Princesses were concerned his Representative.

He asked what my reaction was to this bombshell. I could only reply that the Prime Minister's part had shown a splendid psychological insight and a sound appraisal of his personal qualifications but that he himself could not so easily be asked to take on such an explosive commitment without the clearest direction. Mountbatten then said it was quite clear to him that there would have to be the earliest time limit for the transfer of power. His mission was not to be helplessly compromised with Indian opinion from the start. As for the British reaction he felt that if he agreed to it there would be considerable public sympathy for him in taking on the job. That all his popular support would probably back him up whatever measures he saw fit to take. He was ready to run any risk but did

not in fact think that the traditional risk of his being made the scapegoat was excessive

I am afraid that when we got to Birleys studio and the time came to study the forceful but unfinished portrait my mind was on other things

LONDON *Friday 20th December 1946*

My wife and I attended the British Government's Reception at Lancaster House in honour of Pridi Panomyong the Senior Statesman of Siam who had combined the roles of Regent and resistance leader during the war

Mountbatten arrived at the party rather late. On seeing me there he signalled me into a quiet corner and showed me his reply to the Prime Minister's offer. It was quite brief but while appreciating the honour he had begged to be excused unless he was able to go at the express invitation of the Indian Leaders. I must say I think it is extremely unlikely that Attlee will be able or willing to comply with this condition so this may well be the last we shall hear of the whole proposal. He said he was going straight from the party to Downing Street

LONDON *Friday 20th December 1946*

Mountbatten's acceptance of the Viceroyalty is at last firm. His early talks with the Prime Minister were inconclusive. Government policy accepted the principle of a time limit but havered over the exact date. The second half of 1948 was suggested but Mountbatten's conviction hardened that political success was bound up with the Government's readiness to accept the earliest possible date of British departure from India and he at once bid for second half to mean June rather than December. With the Christmas week at hand final decisions were held over and Mountbatten took himself and his family away for a brief holiday at Davos. He had not been there forty eight hours when he was urgently summoned to London and a special aircraft sent to bring him back. This move was calculated to arouse considerable Press speculation but its meaning was missed.

Mountbatten was recalled because the news from India was increasingly serious. The communal deadlock and violence persisted. The Government wished to announce a new policy and a new Viceroy as quickly as possible. After close consideration of the terms of this draft announcement and in particular the incorporation of a phrase to indicate that his Naval career will not be prejudiced Mountbatten has finally agreed in principle to take on the job. He went so far he told me as to insist that the First Lord and First Sea Lord should associate themselves with the Prime Minister in guaranteeing his return to the Navy. The knowledge that the King was strongly in favour of his

taking the task helped to confirm his decision. In his discussions with the Government he warned them of the danger of giving any impression that his appointment was designed to perpetuate the Viceroy's system or to impose British arbitration. This was his reason for making his acceptance in the first instance conditional upon his seeing an opening in it from the Indian perspective to go on a capacity defined by themselves. Mr. Attlee explained in detail however that this last condition was not feasible but he fully accepted the principle of terminating the British Raj by a specified time regardless of agreement or earlier than the time limit of the Indian parties. It was possible before hand to agree on a constitution for a Government.

His Majesty's Government has shown itself prepared to go to very great lengths to secure Mountbatten's acceptance. Sir Stafford Cripps offered to provide the necessary liaison and an avenue between the Indian Leaders and the new Viceroy and to do his utmost to ensure that the appointment was in fact acceptable to them. Before it was officially announced Cripps went so far as to offer to exercise any capacity in the position of accompanying Mountbatten to India. This offer was not unnaturally shelved. Cripps stated and experience in India has shown would have prejudiced Mountbatten's position and made it virtually impossible for the new Viceroy to carry out his task with the necessary authority or prestige.

LONDON Tuesday 6th February 1947

Local member called on Mountbatten at Chester Street this time to see him about India and gave him a firm and final yes to his invitation to join his staff as Press attaché.

When he had that Attlee's statement in the House of Commons has been the occasion of a fairly lively scene and that Churchill seemed bent on making political capital out of Mountbatten's appointment and the policy underlying it.

The new Viceroy was given very wide mandate. If there was no likelihood of unitary constitution emerging from a freely representative Constituent Assembly by June 1948 then said Mr. Attlee the British Government would have to consider to whom the powers of the central Government in British India should be handed over on the due date whether as a whole to some form of central Government for British India or in some measure to the existing Provincial Government or in such other way as may seem most reasonable and in the best interest of the Indian people. As for the Princely States the Prime Minister made it clear that the Government did not intend to hand over their powers and obligations under Paramountcy to any successor Government of British India. While Paramountcy was to be retained until power was actually transferred it contemplated

that for the intervening period the relations of the Crown with individual States may be adjusted by agreement

Churchill at once jumped up to ask a number of barbed questions about the reasons for Wavell's removal. It must be confessed that Attlee's reference to Wavell had been sufficiently cold and perfunctory to provide Churchill with this particular opening. The time limit also came as a considerable emotional jolt to the Conservative Opposition. What threatened to be a major show-down however petered out through the House of Commons time honoured technique of passing on to other business.

## CHAPTER TWO

### DEBATES AND BRIEFINGS

*LONDON Wednesday 26th February 1947*

THE GREAT TWO-DAY Debate in the House of Lords has ended with Lord Templewood withdrawing his motion of virtual censure on the Government for its announcement of 20th February. This was one of the occasions when the opinions of the House of Lords were not unjustifiably regarded by many as carrying greater political weight than those of the Commons. In the first place in as far as the Lords were discussing the new situation in advance of the forthcoming Commons Debate it was appreciated that the final attitude of the Conservative Opposition might well depend upon the tone set by their Lordships. Moreover they were debating not so much in their hereditary capacity as in the role of elder statesmen, specialists and experts.

A galaxy of names famous in the annals of Indian administration for over a quarter of a century addressed themselves to Lord Templewood's stern declaration that the time limit was a breach of faith imperilling the peace and prosperity of India. Coming from Lord Templewood who as Secretary of State while still known as Sir Samuel Hoare had spent the better part of seven years in steering through the great Government of India Act of 1935 against the most violent and sustained opposition of Mr Churchill and the Conservative right wing this motion was indeed a formidable challenge to the Government and if widely supported calculated to render a united national approach to Indian Independence impossible. By the time Lord Listowel had wound up the first day's Debate for the Government there seemed very little prospect of avoiding a division and a defeat.



The danger loomed larger to-day when Lord Simon of Sm n Commi ion fame resumed f r th Opposition. He spoke for j t ov an hour. It was an essay in closely reas ned n gation a d for b d ng. The accum l ted b rden of the Government's problems as enough to break dow the deliber te c nsider tion of a y man n body of men. However I am bound to say he conclud d th t I adly fear that the end of this busin s is n t g g t be th establishment of p ce n India but r ther th t it is going to d grad th British n me.

After yet another highly critical peech this time by Lord Trench rd Lord Hal f t—the o ly ex Viceroy tak ng part in the Debate—ro t m k hi last great decis n int vention in Indian affairs. It chng s t far bey nd th confines of party f th or discipline h declared —

With s h kn wledge as I ha e I am not prep red to say that v h tev else may b right or wrong th s step mu t on all unts n rtainly be j dged t be wrong. For the truth is that for I d a t-day th re s no l t n that is n t fraught with t e g a est objection with the grav st danger. And the conclus on that I reach—with ll that can be sa d ag nst it—is th t I am not prepar d to condemn wh t H s M jesty's Go ernme t ar d ng n l ss I can honestly and n fidently recommen d a b tter solu tion. I sho ld be sorry f the only m sag fr m th H e to Ind a t this m m t w s one of co d mination bas d on what I mu t f lly rec g ise are ery natural feelngs of fa l re fru t t on and f boding.

Lord Sam l told m afterwards th t it was the mo t per uas e spe h he had er heard d l red in th H use of Lords nd that th mpact was ch that m y Conserv t e P ers wh b f r b rose h d firmly decided to ot aga t th G ernm n changed th r m nd while he was speak g and f ll : with h s ppeal to Templewood to pare th H use the n ces ty of going to a D is on. The rest of the Deb t was an anti-cl max. The tide of opin on had turn d and Templewood while main t n n hi criticisms d ly withd ew his motion.

LONDON *Wed esday 5th Mar h 1947*

Alth ough the open ng of the two-day Debate in the House of Comm was ob ously great Pal l mentary occasi n I co ld n t help feelng when I saw Cripps rise to expound the Govern ment's case with h s c t med po and l cid ty that the key battle for the new policy h d already been w n in the Lord Cripps speech are lways so losely reas ned a d beautifully rranged th t the em tional t mperat s almost immed ately n ps when n speaks. He w ld ne r dream of appeal g to your heart witho t first trying t persuad y ur m nd. B t on this occas on I detected a d per n t of pa on to conviction than ual.

Already Cripps' contribution to India's forthcoming Independence was assured of its place in history. As Lord Halifax had pointed out, the Cripps Mission of 1942 was the decisive act from which there could be no turning back. In 1946 he was the dominating figure of the Cabinet Mission. In both negotiations he had been on the verge of complete agreement and unqualified success, only to see his efforts thwarted at the last minute. In proposing the Government's new approach, he must have known that he was in fact confirming the effective eclipse of his own elaborate master plan to transfer power to a united India.

He was at pains to stress that it was administratively and militarily out of the question to stay on beyond 1948. Otherwise he laid no special emphasis on the time limit, and he made no reference whatever to Lord Wavell. This last omission was undoubtedly a pity, as it tended to confirm the ill-disposed gossip about serious differences of opinion between the Government and the returning Viceroy. Cripps throughout did his utmost to leave the door open for a revised Cabinet Mission Plan. Now is the time, he said in his final peroration, when the wider good of all India, throughout which both communities are widely dispersed, must take precedence over the narrower claims of single communities or single parts of that great continental area.

Sir John Anderson moved a detailed amendment on behalf of the Conservative Opposition, which he supported with a ponderous oration. The formula was in effect an elaborate attempt on Sir John's part to reconcile what Lord Halifax had said last week with what Mr. Churchill was likely to say to-morrow. But this was a formidable task, even for one of Anderson's drafting calibre. As was perhaps to be expected, he largely confined himself to an exhaustive condemnation of the Government's time-limit proposal. Under cover of a dense dialectical smoke screen he worked his way towards a position of proposing a final date for an agreed central authority failing which the Government should resume freedom of action to transfer power to convenient separate authorities as speedily as possible. Anderson is a disappointing Parliamentarian. This aspect of his career has been superimposed upon too many other distinctions too late in life. The result is a pomposity of manner and a heaviness of expression which weaken both his arguments and influence in the House.

The more persuasive performances to-day came from back-benchers speaking from their own experience, sometimes against the party line. Perhaps the most original suggestion under this heading was put forward by the Socialist rebel Zilliacus, who saw India as the classic problem of national minorities who are distrustful at being left to the tender mercies of the majority. In this instance, however, the Moslem community was more than a national minority, but somewhat less than an independent nation. He cited the example of the U.S.S.R. to suggest that India

enjoy multi-national membership of the United Nations which would enable the Moslems to live the same status as the Ukrainians and become equal members.

LONDON Tuesday 6th March 1947

When Churchill resumed the Debate to-day we were regaled with the long & tired & wretched play. On the year Churchill has remained very loyal to his pet errors as a dhat may perhaps best be termed his India National Claims probably the most rigid and unbending of all his opinions upon the problems of our time.

He started off by taking his stand with the Croppers Mission of 1942. Although the Moslems had not been accepted at that time his studies of the House were still based by it. He discussed the present position in India and part from the scope and integrity of its principles. There as to that reference to the debate to the War but it is a fine medal. The Vice-roy Lord Wavell has been demoted. I hold no brief for Lord Wavell. He has been the unwilling agent of the Government in all the errors and mistakes which they have been led. But he continued to say that he did not know why Wavell had been cast aside. It is a fact and it is a price for a poem. I state it from his mouth and return.

A for the new Viceroy I hope to make new efforts to restore the situation or at least to open the Scuttlion which he and other distinguished officials have been despatched. I must not to say the whole thing we wish a perfect attempt by the Government to make use of brilliant work for the sake of to cover up a miserable & dishonest & untrustworthy.

He then entered the field of prophecy. India is to be subjected not merely to partition but to fragmentation and a haphazard fragmentation. The time limit for bringing the Indian parties to their senses was calculated to make them step up to the demand. These parties claim to represent the Indian masses.

These so-called political classes were a handful of men of the world of whom in a few years not a trace will remain. These Government by their latest action in fifteen months limit the crippling the new Viceroy and destroy the prospect of even going through the business of the good which has to be settled.

He found wholly incomprehensible the time limit for India but the lack of his P. Leites. Could the House believe that there were three or four times as many British troops in little petty P. Leites as in mighty India at the present time? He could find no sense in this but it is of course only positive proposals were that there should be a new and—a typical Churchillian surprise—that 700,000 soldiers should be taken up and the problem of the Moslem minority submitted to the

United Nations And so to the funeral conclusion Many have defended Britain against her foes none can defend her against herself But at least let us not add—by shameful flight by a premature hurried scuttle—at least let us not add to the pangs of sorrow so many of us feel the taint and smear of shame

When Attlee rose at last from the Treasury Bench there was an air of expectancy which had somehow been missing before In deed one of the things which surprised me while Cripps was speaking yesterday was the thinness of the Labour ranks After Question Time they had trooped out not to return again en bloc until the Prime Minister brought the Debate to a close the following evening He certainly did not disappoint them Although I have often listened to Attlee on various themes this is the first time I have heard him on India which is undoubtedly his special subject His two years service as a member of the Simon Commission was clearly one of the most formative experiences of his life and historically speaking probably the most important thing about the Simon Commission Those who are interested in working out the contrast between Churchill and Attlee should not overlook the Indian motif

On this occasion Attlee brought to bear on his famous adversary a debating armament of a calibre which I for one had no idea he possessed He put aside his notes spoke straight from the heart, and the result was a genuine eloquence His style did not change but he simply ceased to be commonplace This man burns with a hidden fire and is sustained by a certain spiritual integrity which enables him to scale the heights when the great occasion demands Churchill was raked with delicate irony It was close in fighting which is sometimes lost upon the general public but which scores points with the judges and wins bouts in the Parliamentary ring

Attlee firmly rebutted the doctrine that Wavell was under some necessity to make a personal statement on his return to put it colloquially if a change of bowling is desired it is not always necessary that there should be an elaborate explanation As for the attack on the admission of the Indian politicians into the Government and the desire to continue with the caretaker administration—the essence of the Indian problem is to get Indian statesmen to understand what are the real problems they have to face A very grave fault of the reforms that we have carried out over these years is that we have taught irresponsibility instead of responsibility All Indian politicians were permanently in opposition and speaking with long experience it is not good to be always in opposition

He then turned to our responsibilities to the minorities Here he made the shrewd point that in so far as the existence of the scheduled castes (Untouchables) and their position was part of the whole Hindu social system the British Raj had lacked

the will but the power to aid the people. With one or two special exceptions, our policy had been to accept the social and economic system we had found. Why are we told now, he asked, at the very end of our rule that we must clear up all the things before we go, otherwise we shall betray our trust? If that trust is there, it ought to have been fulfilled long ago. Essentially the danger of delaying the dangers of hanging were as great as the danger of going forward. He concluded by saying he was sure the whole House would wish Godspeed to the new Viceroy in his great mission. It is a mission not as has been suggested of betrayal on our part, it is a mission of fulfilment.

The Prime Minister's speech and in particular his peroration, ruled him back to his supporter. He normally plays a somewhat parochial and passive attitude to a discussion to a high pitch of enthusiasm. When the House decided the vote was three hundred and thirty-seven in favour of the Government's policy and our mission, and a hundred and eighty-five against. Although Mr. Attlee's appeal that there should be a united message of goodwill from the House to the Indian Leaders and people had failed to prevent a Division, the strictly Party lines were not helpful coming away from this historic Debate with the sense that the gulf between Government and Opposition was firmer than some of Mr. Churchill's more sombre polemics might suggest.

LONDON Monday 10th March 1947

In general it can be said that Mountbatten, briefing himself for the political task that lay ahead of him, starting from scratch. He had first escorted Lord Bessborough first as an ADC to the Prince of Wales on his tour in 1911. Then between October 1943 and April 1944 New Delhi was his headquarters as Supreme Allied Commander, but the post had been formed for the express purpose of separating the responsibility for the prosecution of the war in South-east Asia from that of the internal defence and security of India and its administration as a base. Moreover, although the scope of his duties ranged beyond strictly military operations, his parapolitical interests did not include India. He used to see a lot of Lord Wavell and officially the Viceroy's relation to him as Supreme Commander was that of Minister of State appointed with a special directive to advise and represent the Government in the equivalent of past established in the Middle East theatre of war.

Towards the end of his term in South-east Asia Command Mountbatten had his first meeting with Jawaharlal Nehru, the occasion of Nehru's visit to Malaya at the suggestion of Lord Wavell to see the large Indian minority there. It was a most successful and happy encounter. I was present.

of it and it was quite clear that the two men made a deep personal impression upon each other

From the moment his appointment was announced Mountbatten has been caught up in a hectic sequence of meetings and interviews. He has seen the King whose constitutional position is vitally affected and has been in almost regular session with the India Burma Committee of the Cabinet which includes Attlee, Cripps, Alexander and Pethick Lawrence and is concerned with the detailed elaboration and control of the Government's Indian policy. There have also been detailed discussions with the Chiefs of Staff and India Office experts. They have ranged over the whole field from the terms of the Government's directive to the Viceroy to compensation for the Indian Civil Service from the movement of British civilians from India with its effect on world shipping capacity to the future of the Gurkhas and the strategic defence of the Indian Ocean.

First and foremost has been the consideration given to the amendment of the so called Governor General's Instrument of Instructions, the official standing directive which it is his duty to try to implement. Mountbatten has had an important part to play in the issue of new instructions to himself. The existing Instrument is in effect the execution and fulfilment of the intentions of Parliament as embodied in the great Act of 1935 and although its provisions do not directly conflict with His Majesty's Government's new policy they are not by now fully consistent with it. Strictly there should be a new Instrument but as there will be no direct inconsistency until new legislation for the actual transfer of power is passed the Government agreed to let it slide. Mountbatten however has insisted on a directive of some sort to amplify the Instrument, feeling it is essential that the object of his appointment should be clearly set out by the Prime Minister. He has asked for it in the form of a letter to himself from Mr Attlee.

Once this was approved he had a lot to do in the drafting of the text which contains the following major points of policy for his guidance —

(1) The definite objective of the British Government is to obtain a unitary Government for British India and the Indian States if possible within the British Commonwealth through the medium of a Constituent Assembly set up and run in accordance with the Cabinet Mission Plan. He was instructed to do the utmost in his power to persuade all Parties to work together towards this end. The insertion of the phrase if possible within the British Commonwealth is at the special request of Mountbatten who feels that he must strive for a solution which leaves such good feeling that the Indian Parties will want to remain within the Commonwealth.

(2) Since however the Cabinet Mission Plan can become operative in respect of British India only by agreement between the two major Parties there can be no question of compelling either Party to accept it. If by the 1st October Mountbatten considers there is no prospect of reaching a settlement on the basis of unitary Government he is to report to the British Government on the steps he considers should be taken for the handover of power on the due date.

(3) For guidance in his relations with the States Mr Attlee laid down that he was to do his best to persuade Rulers of States in which political progress had been slow to go forward rapidly towards the introduction of some form of more democratic government in the States and towards the formulation of firmer and just arrangements with the leaders of British India as to their future relationships.

(4) As far as his administration of British India was concerned the keynote of this was to be the closest co-operation with Indians.

(5) Transfer of power was to be in accordance with Indian Defence requirements and he was to impress upon the Indians the importance of avoiding a break in the continuity of the Indian Army and to point out the need for continued collaboration in the security of the Indian Ocean.

Attlee's letter certainly embodies the most formidable terms of reference ever given by a Government to a Viceroy.

LONDON Tuesday 11th March 1947

In the matter of engagements Mountbatten has been careful to include the Opposition leaders. Some of these discussions have been quite private and informal. Tonight he came round to my flat for the first meeting which ever had with Lord Samuel. Lord Samuel arrived a few minutes early and Mountbatten on time. It came as quite a jolt to see the Admiral in plain clothes—teddy bear coat and bowler hat perched on the top of his head. I understand the Admiralty Fleet Orders describe his first appointment as Rear Admiral etc., seconded temporary duty Viceroy!

He was at pains to stress that as far as he was concerned his appointment had the cordial approval of the King who had personally appealed to him on ground of national duty to accept it. Attlee had observed all the proprieties and the Opposition were quite wrong in saying that it was simply the Prime Minister's appointment. He could not see what alternative there was to a time limit. June 1948 might not be long enough but Wavell himself had advised this date on the grounds that the administrative services would have run down by then. Speaking from the purely

personal view point he said it was probably better to take over when the situation was at its lowest ebb Bihar and Bengal had been in a sense inoculated after their recent outbreaks but he felt the present Punjab crisis was inevitable The situation in the Punjab had been very tense for some time The Moslem Coalition Prime Minister had for the past five months been compelled to move from house to house each night to avoid the threat of assassination at the hands of the Moslem League Mountbatten felt there would probably also be trouble from the north in the North west Frontier Province

He recalled the warning he had given to Sir Hubert Rance before Rance left to become Governor of Burma It was that he should wait until the situation was at its worst but he had gone out from a sense of duty a bit too quickly and instead of arriving while the big Rangoon strike was on did so a few days before it began thereby incurring some of the blame for it Mountbatten felt that in his own case it would not be possible for anyone to hold him responsible for the present troubles in India and that this in itself would be a great advantage in the negotiations ahead of him He asked for advice on the lines he should pursue Answering his own question and thinking aloud he said he favoured a week's private talk with the key leaders in Simla This should supply occasion for a completely frank and uninhibited exchange of views Samuel was content to do most of the listening but stressed the need for maintaining the constitutional link with the Crown after the transfer of power perhaps even through the retention of the Viceregal title

I was very glad to have been able to arrange this meeting as in spite of obvious disparities of age and outlook the two men have much in common Samuel's influence in the Lords is very great and his goodwill in the coming months may be of value out of all proportion to the Liberal voting strength

*LONDON Monday 17th March 1947*

A crowded day In the morning I saw Lady Mountbatten who is extremely kind and cordial about my joining the party I mentioned that at dinner last night with the Laytons Lady Layton had referred to the great influence in Sardar Patel's household of his daughter Maniben who was reported to be very suspicious of British intentions Lady Mountbatten agreed adding that Jinnah's sister no less influential was also reported to hold strong views and to be a formidable factor in the situation Mountbatten I know has asked her to establish early contact with the women who matter in India and who have hitherto had no relations with Viceroy's House

I went on to 10 Downing Street where I had a most helpful talk with Francis Williams the Prime Minister's Public Relations Officer He has given me a number of useful introductions



(2) Since however the Cabinet Mission Plan can become operative in respect of British India only by agreement between the two major Parties there can be no question of compelling either Party to accept it. By the 1st October Mountbatten considers there is no prospect of reaching a settlement on the basis of unitary Government. He is to report to the British Government on the steps he considers should be taken for the handover of power on the due date.

(3) For guidance in his relations with the States Mr Attlee laid down that he was to do his best to persuade Rulers of States in which political progress had been slow to go forward rapidly towards the introduction of some form of more democratic government in their States and towards the formulation of fair and just arrangements with the leaders of British India as to their future relationships.

(4) As far as his administration of British India was concerned the keynote of this was to be the closest co-operation with Indians.

(5) Transfer of power was to be in accordance with Indian Defence requirements and he was to impress upon the Indian leaders the importance of avoiding a break in the continuity of the Indian Army and to point out the need for continued collaboration in the security of the Indian Ocean.

Attlee's letter certainly embodies the most formidable terms of reference ever given by a Government to a Viceroy.

LONDON Tuesday 11th March 1947

In the welter of engagements Mountbatten has been careful to include the Opposition leaders. Some of these discussions have been quite private and informal. To-night he came round to my flat for the first time. He had conferred with Lord Samuel. Lord Samuel arrived a few minutes early and Mountbatten on time. It came as quite a jolt to see the Admiral in plain clothes—teddy, beret and bowler hat perched on the top of his head. I understood the Admiralty Fleet Orders describe his latest appointment as Rear Admiral etc. seconded temporary duty Viceroy!

He was at pains to stress that as far as he was concerned his appointment had the cordial approval of the King who had personally appealed to him on grounds of national duty to accept it. Attlee had observed all the proprieties and the Opposition were quite wrong in saying that it was simply the Prime Minister's appointment. He could not see what alternative there was to a time limit, June 1948 might not be long enough but Wavell himself had advised this date on the grounds that the administrative services would have run down by then. Speaking from the purely

personal view point he said it was probably better to take over when the situation was at its lowest ebb. Bihar and Bengal had been in a sense inoculated after their recent outbreaks, but he felt the present Punjab crisis was inevitable. The situation in the Punjab had been very tense for some time. The Moslem Coalition Prime Minister had for the past five months been compelled to move from house to house each night to avoid the threat of assassination at the hands of the Moslem League. Mountbatten felt there would probably also be trouble from the north in the North west Frontier Province.

He recalled the warning he had given to Sir Hubert Rance before Rance left to become Governor of Burma. It was that he should wait until the situation was at its worst but he had gone out from a sense of duty, a bit too quickly and instead of arriving while the big Rangoon strike was on did so a few days before it began thereby incurring some of the blame for it. Mountbatten felt that in his own case it would not be possible for anyone to hold him responsible for the present troubles in India and that this in itself would be a great advantage in the negotiations ahead of him. He asked for advice on the lines he should pursue. Answering his own question and thinking aloud he said he favoured a week's private talk with the key leaders in Simla. This should supply occasion for a completely frank and uninhibited exchange of views. Samuel was content to do most of the listening but stressed the need for maintaining the constitutional link with the Crown after the transfer of power perhaps even through the retention of the Viceregal title.

I was very glad to have been able to arrange this meeting as in spite of obvious disparities of age and outlook the two men have much in common. Samuel's influence in the Lords is very great and his goodwill in the coming months may be of value out of all proportion to the Liberal voting strength.

LONDON *Monday 17th March 1947*

A crowded day. In the morning I saw Lady Mountbatten who is extremely kind and cordial about my joining the party. I mentioned that at dinner last night with the Laytons Lady Layton had referred to the great influence in Sardar Patel's household of his daughter Maniben who was reported to be very suspicious of British intentions. Lady Mountbatten agreed adding that Jinnah's sister no less influential was also reported to hold strong views and to be a formidable factor in the situation. Mountbatten I know has asked her to establish early contact with the women who matter in India and who have hitherto had no relations with Viceroy's House.

I went on to 10 Downing Street where I had a most helpful talk with Francis Williams the Prime Minister's Public Relations Officer. He has given me a number of useful introductions and

has shown himself keenly alive to the scale of the Public Relations problems confronting me. I leave fortified by the knowledge of his firm support. I have also received invaluable help from A. H. Joyce the able and experienced Officer in charge of Information at the India Office who is most co-operative and full of sound doctrine.

In the morning to the House for a reception given by the High Commissioner Sir Samuel Rungtunga. From the Press point of view it was a veritable bear garden and a most useful commentary on the paper I have just printed. Mr. Mountbatten against large scale Indian confederations in India. We heard no idea that the Press was going to belt it out on him at this particular gathering. The whole place was flooded for a news reel interview and Mountbatten was surrounded by about a dozen London correspondents of Indian papers who buzzed round him like a swarm of bees seeking a victim. No attempt was made by the host to rescue him. One particularly persistent reporter asked him if he had ever read Karl Marx and a little later assured him that he approved his appointment. It would no doubt be better for an Admiral to deal with the British situation by sea! I left the party with Mountbatten who was I think much chastened by his experience. His only comment was 'We live and learn'.

MALTA Wednesday 19th April 1947

It has been arranged for Mountbatten and his staff to fly out to India in the two York aircraft *M14101* and *M14102* which were allotted respectively to the King and to Mountbatten's Supreme Commander South-east Asia during the war. Mountbatten, Lady Mountbatten and Emma with Ronald Brockman and Peter Howes do not leave until to-morrow. They will be flying rather more ruthlessly than ourselves and when they reach Delhi they will be only two hours flying time behind us. Fortunately I am in a Simla plane who made it clear that he proposes to travel to a comfortable schedule arriving at the various staging points at convenient hours.

After being obliged to shed some of our luggage we took off at 11.30 a.m. about half an hour late. The first leg of the journey was uneventful and the route difficult to follow. We passed over Pripignan and Pergeux, and then made a wide sweep taking the course of a following wind along the North

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Lieutenant-Commander Peter Howes DSC R.N. previously nominated as Lord Mountbatten's Flag Lieutenant in the First Cruiser Squadron and now to become his senior A.D.C. in India. He included among his A.D.C.s three Indian serving officers, one from each Service appointed on a full-time basis and the first to hold such posts.

African coast. We came finally to Malta from the south by way of Cape Bon—dark purple in the sunset. On arrival at Luqa Ismay and Mievile drove off to dine with the mighty while the rest of us were graded as VIP 2 which as Martin Gilliat Mountbatten's new Deputy Military Secretary wryly observed meant that we were low life mere parasites of the great. It also meant bare beds in bare rooms.

After dinner one member of our party became very learned on Maltese culture, customs and history—their stone masonry, their goat economy etc. He explained that some British official in his wisdom had laid down a hundred years ago that all ships had to pay their harbour dues by bringing in earth. This ruling which would seem sufficiently creative and unorthodox to have earned instant dismissal for its perpetrator has in fact helped to give an arable top dressing to an otherwise bare rock. Ended the day with some good Naval rum to counteract the frosty air.

### CHAPTER THREE

## THE FIRST WEEK

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Saturday 22nd March 1947*  
LEFT KARACHI PROMPTLY at 9.15 a.m. after some fitful sleep on a very hard Indian bed for the last eight hundred miles of our journey over the deserts of Sind and Rajputana to Delhi. This was my seventh flight between England and India and the abiding impression is desert four thousand miles of it without an appreciable break from the sands of Tunis to the foothills of the Himalayas. We touched down at Palam airfield exactly to schedule at 12.30 p.m. We were met by the Commander in Chief Field Marshal Auchinleck—a very nice gesture on his part as two hours later he was due back to join the much larger party receiving Mountbatten's aircraft. We were whisked away without luggage worries in Viceregal cars and the year's high living had begun.

Immediately on arrival at Viceroy's House we were told that we were due to lunch with the Wavells. It was to be their last lunch party as Viceroy and Vicereine. It was served on the terrace of the Moghul gardens under the shadow of the south west wing of Lutyens's vast imperial palace. While waiting for Their Excellencies to arrive Ismay engaged in a friendly chat with some of the senior *kutmutgars* who remembered him when he was here as Willingdon's Military Secretary.

During the afternoon there was much preparation and bustle in the main courtyard and up the steps leading to the great Durbar Hall of Viceroys House. At 3.45 p.m. the Mountbattens duly arrived in the open landau with the Governor General's escort and outrider. They were conducted up the long flight of steps—red-carpeted for the occasion—by Colonel Douglas Currie the Military Secretary and an A.D.C. At the top they were received by the Waells. Lady Mountbatten curtsied and Mountbatten bowed his head to the Viceroy for the first and last time on this mission. They stood talking for quite a while long enough for the ubiquitous camermen to take some pleasant shots of them. Vern Erskin Cameron tells me that European sentiment here is definitely anti Mountbatten on four grounds—

- (1) that he knows nothing about India
- (2) that he is bringing a staff who know nothing about India and who are doing good men out of good jobs
- (3) that he is a plucky boy
- (4) that Wavell has been treated abominably and there is no good reason for his removal

Mountbatten can be trusted to deal by his presence and actions with (1) and (3) within a matter of days. (2) clearly cannot refer to I. May or M. C. Evile—so that let us leave the rest of us! We are not of course doing anyone out of jobs but are merely additional to the normal Viceregal set-up. But we shall have to tread carefully and avoid tender corns. (4) is primarily the responsibility of Attlee who has failed to say the generous word.

All this may be the view of the British about it but on our side it is all too easy to start off with the feeling that Mountbatten has been called in after the situation has become hopeless and that the Government has propounded a transfer of power without knowing how it can be effected. We have inherited first of all a communal rioting which is spreading as though by chain reaction the key Province of the Punjab with its threefold Hindu, Moslem and Sikh Communal problem governed by emergency decree a Viceregal plan which is nothing more nor less than a phased military evacuation a Congress formula for an Independent Sovereign Republic with a Direct Action campaign by the Moslem League to resist it Paramountcy which returns to the Indian Princes but contains no machinery for direct negotiation to provide a new relationship with our successors in British India or indeed with anyone else.

So now here we have the people rioting the Princes falling out among themselves the entire Indian Civil Service and Police running down and the British who are left sceptical and full of foreboding. I detect in Mountbatten however just the same optimism that uplifted us all when we arrived here in Delhi some three and a half years ago on the then impossible task of crea-

ing South-east Asia Command out of the ashes of defeat and depression

Mountbatten has wasted no time whatever in sending off two simple and straightforward letters to Gandhi and Jinnah expressing the hope that it will be possible for them to come and see him soon. In Gandhi's case he appreciates his preoccupations in Bihar where he is carrying out his repentance tours through the areas of the worst communal disturbance. Incidentally Gandhi is so preoccupied that it is still doubtful whether he will attend the great Pan Asian Conference which is due to be held under the shadow of the Old Fort on Monday. Mountbatten's immediate approach to Gandhi and Jinnah in this way even before Wavell has left is typical of the man and his methods.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Sunday 23rd March 1947*

The Wavells left promptly at 8.15 in the morning. It has certainly been no day of rest for us. There has been much administrative panic in connection with the publicity for to-morrow's Swearing in Ceremony. It has never before been photographed or filmed and now is the last chance. I went round to Mountbatten's suite and had a discussion with the Viceroy designate clad in his underpants and vest on the implications of letting in all the local news reel and camera men twenty-two altogether or leaving some out. He proposed that a large platform should be built for them at triforium level near the circular dome which I am quite sure will not be acceptable to any of the interested parties. He showed me this morning's masterpiece on the front page of *Dawn*. It is a photograph of Ronnie Brockman and Elizabeth Ward, Lady Mountbatten's private secretary in which they are described as Lord and Lady Louis arriving!\*

The reaction of the Indian Press to Mountbatten on his arrival is satisfactory. He is pleased at the tributes paid to Wavell and says he would have hated to be written up at Wavell's expense. In any case he prefers to start off on a low note.

He has decided on another innovation—a brief address as part of the Swearing in Ceremony. He read out George Abell's first draft to me. I think the speech is well conceived and well timed for he must seize the initiative quickly and this calls for imaginative and unusual action. During dinner a draft revised by Mountbatten himself was handed to me. It contained one sentence which worried me. After commenting on the British Government's resolve to effect the transfer of power by June 1948 he proposes to add in fact a solution must be reached within the next six months if there is to be adequate time for it to be im-

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\* As they were Lord and Lady Louis Mountbatten before he received his Viscounty for war services they are still by called Lord and Lady Louis

plement d I felt th s wording was likely to be misinterpreted d e en taken to mply an escape cl u e from the Government s h thert unqualified time limit Mountbatten s first react on is that he has the Go ernment s authority to r port progress by October so hy not say so now? But this is his specially chosen first bo v If he starts off by unw ttingly throwing doubt on the Government s time limit pledge I can imagine nothing mor d sastrous

It s just after 1 a.m. and an A.D.C. h s come through to say th t His Excell ncy has r vised his speech and wh t is he to do about giving t to th Press? The ambiguous sentence I am relieved to say is out

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI Monday 24th 31 of 1947

Up bet me for the Swearing in Ceremony It as s milar in form to Wavell s fir t invest ure which I had attended in the Durb r Hall in 1943 the am trumpets fr m the roof acting as shatter ng prelude th n the A.D.C. in stiff proces ion leading Th r Excell ncy towards the throne In all ths royal spl nd ur the Mountbattens indeed sh wed th ms lves to be to th manner born Mountbatt n himself looked uperb with th d rk blu r bbon of Knight of the Garter and the merwh lming array of ord rs and decorations acro s h s ch t In add uon to the Garter th y were headed by no fewer th n three Grand Crosses the E.C.B. and D.S.O

Lady Mountbatten for her part, was the epitome of grace with her new ord r of the Crown of Ind a besides all her war med ls and other decorations on her dress of iv ry brocad The red and gold thrones were set in bold relief by the lght ng concealed in the rich red elv t h ng ngs Arc lghts played down upon the scene as Sir Patrick Spens the Lord Ch ef Just ce of India adm nstered the oath and Mountbatten repeated t fier him

The film cameras whirled and the flash bulbs went off for the first time n the confines f the Durbar Hall I r mained n guard with the photographers to ensure that there were no ugly ru hes but they all behaved admirably Mountbatten s responses and his address although del ered with gre t emphasis were almost inaudible at the back of the hall the acoust cs wer abom nable even quite near to him it was most difficult to catch what he as saying

The whole ceremony wa compl ted in exactly a quarter of an hou the address taking four m notes On each sid of th thrones were flanked the Leaders of the new India upon whom w ll rest such terrifying respons bility in the com ng weeks I noticed both Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan listened with the ut

most attention to the speech which of course came as a complete surprise to them

There were two important and as far as I know unexplained absentees—the Nawab of Bhopal and the Maharaja of Bikaner. George Abell darted up just before ten past ten to see if Bhopal had taken his place but he had not and the seat was removed. Considering that both Bhopal and Bikaner are Mountbatten's two oldest personal friends in India and the importance attached by the Princes to ceremonial etiquette in general and the Viceregal connection in particular their failure to be present to day is a good indication of disunity and crisis in their ranks.

Mountbatten had three hours with Nehru and two with Liaquat this afternoon. They discussed Liaquat's Budget the immediate bone of contention between the two Parties. Wavell has warned Mountbatten that he will find this a very awkward opening problem to tackle when he presides over his first Executive Council. Liaquat as Finance Minister in the Interim Government by proposing heavy taxes on all large incomes has put the Congress into the invidious position of being called upon to protect its big business supporters and of seeking relief for them apparently at the expense of its own progressive and equalitarian declarations. The feeling is that some compromise will be found for there is a limit beyond which neither the Moslem League nor the Congress can go in taxing wealthy subscribers.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Tuesday 25th March 1947*

I attended Mountbatten's first Staff Meeting which took place in his dark air-cooled study and consisted of Ismay, Merville, George Abell, Brockman, Erskine, Crum and myself. It is Mountbatten's intention that these informal round table moots should be held on a day to day basis enabling him to think aloud without any mental reservations. They are to be a direct continuation in a far more intimate form of the staff techniques he instituted at Combined Operations and developed in South East Asia Command. Mountbatten started off with a lively account of yesterday's interviews with Nehru and Liaquat as well as with Bikaner and Bhopal who both came round to explain their absence from the Swearing in Ceremony. At the end of all these sessions six hours in all he confessed that he felt like a boiled egg.

The Bhopal and Bikaner interviews revealed the full scale of the split among the Princes. This is a great grief to Bhopal who feels that Bikaner and the other dissidents by allowing themselves to take part in the Constituent Assembly are becoming the tools of Congress and undermining the whole bargaining position of the States—hitherto they had succeeded in standing their own outside the communal fury. Bhopal thought the



limit was quite impossible and if enforced must involve bloodshed and chaos. He asked Mountbatten earnestly whether there was any possible escape from it. Mountbatten said there was of course one and only one way out and that 'as an invitation from all the Indian parties to us to remain—a most unlikely contingency. If the Bhopal was not so sure that as the time drew on such an offer might not be made.

Bikaner whom Mountbatten questioned on this point was not so sanguine. He argued for the so-called 'dissident' Princes, and while agreeing that the split was most unfortunate stressed that it was Bhopal who by his attitude to the Interim Government, had caused the communal issue to be raised among them. The dissidents by taking part in the Constituent Assembly would immeasurably strengthen the new central regime and help to ensure that it was not in fact a purely Congress set-up.

Mountbatten's first interview with Nehru was illuminating. In expansive mood Nehru ran through his interpretation of the major development from the period of the Cabinet Mission onwards. Mountbatten considered it was substantially accurate and filled with information he had gathered in London. In Nehru's view Wallah had made one serious blunder in inviting the Moslem League to come into the Interim Government instead of waiting a little longer for them to ask to be brought in. He spoke of a private Moslem League meeting at which Jinnah had in fact already capitulated on this issue.

Mountbatten asked Nehru to give him his own estimate of Jinnah. Nehru recalled that he had done so in his recent book but this did not prevent him from giving a further penetrating impression. Nehru said the essential thing to realise about Jinnah is that he is a man to whom success has come very late in life—at over sixty. Before that he had not been a major figure in Indian politics. He was a successful lawyer but not an especially good one and Nehru stressed the necessity of making this particular distinction in Jinnah's case. The secret of his success—and it had been tremendous if only for its emotional intensity—was in his capacity to take up a permanently negative attitude. This he had done with complete singleness of purpose ever since 1935. He knew that Pakistan could never stand up to constructive criticism, and he had ensured that it should never be subjected to it.

Mountbatten next asked what Nehru thought was the biggest single problem facing India to-day and he replied at once 'the economic one'. Thereupon Mountbatten asked him whether he was satisfied with the way the Interim Government was tackling it. Nehru said he was not but the position was made impossible by the League who were determined to sabotage any economic planning from the centre. Such planning if it succeeded would *ipso facto* undermine the case for Pakistan with regard to the

Punjab Nehru put forward a proposal he has made before of a tripartite administration of the Province divided up on communal lines with a central authority to deal with certain major non-communal subjects. He was convinced this was the only way to break the intolerable deadlock of Government under Section 93\* which Wavell had had to impose at the beginning of this month.

The vexed question of compensation for the Indian Civil Service on the transfer of power was raised at this interview. Nehru thought we were crazy to want to compensate civil servants to whom the offer of remaining on in their jobs was open. The new Government would pledge itself to offer them the same conditions of contract as they had previously enjoyed. Mountbatten said there could be no question of the British Government going back on its word and he could not think Nehru was suggesting that it should. Nehru admitted that as far as the British were concerned it was of course purely the British Government's affair. But even so why compensate them on such a lavish scale? This could only encourage them to leave their posts. And what about the Indians? Here it was a question of their continuing in the service of their own countrymen. The proposals really were crazy as they stood. Mountbatten however firmly asked for his support on them. He thought Nehru had misunderstood British psychology. The more lavish and clear-cut the compensation the greater was the likelihood of the British civil servants remaining on.

In Mountbatten's view Nehru was extremely frank and fair and astounded him by actually suggesting at one point an Anglo-Indian union involving nothing less than common citizenship—in effect a far closer bond than Commonwealth status which Nehru felt was psychologically and emotionally unacceptable.

At the end of the interview as Nehru was about to take his leave Mountbatten said to him: Mr Nehru I want you to regard me not as the last Viceroy winding up the British Raj but as the first to lead the way to the new India. Nehru turned, looked intensely moved, smiled and then said: Now I know what they mean when they speak of your charm being so dangerous.

During his talk Liaquat asked a leading question about Mountbatten's swearing in speech. He wanted to know who was responsible for the idea. Mountbatten said he could answer that at once. It was entirely his own and produced at nobody's request. Indeed some of his own staff had been against it. I

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\* A reference to Section 93 of the Government of India Act of 1935 which under conditions of civil disturbance enabled Viceroy and Governors of the Indian Provinces to invoke powers and govern by decree.

am pleased to hear that said Liaquat for no fewer than three highly placed and well informed sources had assured me that you had made the speech at the request of Congress. This little incident is a good example of the prevailing communal suspicion and no time has been lost by either side in pressing home all possible points against the other.

Perhaps the most significant commentary on Nehru's Punjab proposals was a telegram from Sir E. A. Jenkins, the Governor of the Punjab, to which Mountbatten drew attention at the Staff Meeting. Jenkins reported that Giani Kartar Singh, an influential Sikh leader, had stated that in the absence of an agreement between Congress and the League acceptable to the Sikhs, the Sikhs must insist on the partition of the Punjab and could resist with all their resources any endeavour to set up a Muslim League Ministry there in the meanwhile. This speech has added to the authority in that the Sikhs have already persuaded Congress to put up a resolution—accepted incidentally by Wallis only a week before Mountbatten arrived—in favour of partitioning the Punjab.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Wednesday 26th March 1947*

Mountbatten began this morning's Staff Meeting with another vivid summary of yesterday's interviews. Quite apart from keeping notes, he has a photographic memory and the journal is a perception of human detail. Yesterday he saw Dr John Matthai, Minister for Railways, Sir Conrad Corfield, Secretary to the Political Department, and last but not least Vallabhbhai Patel, Matthal, who is a Christian and in no sense a Party man, gave in Mountbatten's estimate a first-class appreciation in a very way balanced and reasonable. Matthal stressed that a horrifying feature of the situation was that all those who were trying to steer an honourable straight course were gradually losing their influence and becoming increasingly disliked and distrusted by both sides. Matthal said that he had done his best for a stance to back Liaquat's Budget only to find himself subjected to bitter attack by Datta.

Corfield, who is constitutionally adviser to the Viceroy in his capacity as Crown Representative on all matters affecting the Indian States, argued with some bitterness that Bhanu by taking his place in the Constituent Assembly had seriously weakened the bargaining power of the Princes. Corfield is clearly on Bhanu's side in this controversy and seems to see the Princes as a potential "Third Force" in the transfer of power.

Mountbatten had been somewhat apprehensive about his first meeting with Patel, who has the reputation of being the strong man of the Congress High Command, but he very quickly detected a twinkle in the Sardar's eye. His approach to the whole problem was clear and decisive. India must get rid of the Mos-

lem League The League was actually boasting about the developments in the Punjab They must be mad All was serene until they touched on compensation At this point Patel raised his hand and vowed that if any Indian accepted compensation he would never be employed again

In the evening I dined with Maurice Zinkin a very clever young Indian Civil Service man whom I first met in Delhi in 1943 He is now working as an assistant secretary in the Finance Department and as an official has been fairly closely involved in the framing of Liaquat's controversial budget which soaks the Hindu rich and is calculated to widen the breach between the millionaire and four anna subscribers to Congress Maurice had also invited K M Panikkar whom I was particularly anxious to meet Panikkar sports a small imperial beard He is an historian politician and journalist a man of prodigious learning and profound judgement and no mean practitioner in the dying art of good conversation

I gave him a clear run by asking What would you do if you were in Mountbatten's place? He replied at once that Mountbatten as a Naval strategist must realise that British interest was best served by the creation of a solid centralised State based on India's seaboard on more than three hundred millions of the people and on geographical and religious unity Hindustan is the elephant he said and Pakistan the two ears The elephant can live without the ears He admitted frankly that Jinnah could make an essentially reasonable case In a four roomed house he asks for only one room but he wants that room to be his own He is unwilling to entrust local Moslem majorities to a strong Hindu-controlled central government Panikkar's thesis was in effect that we should not try to impose a larger unity than India was fundamentally seeking Nehru's tripartite proposals for the Punjab were the first sign of Congress acceptance of the Hindustan Pakistan division Jinnah's experience with the Sikhs must have made him realise that the unity of the Punjab was physically impossible

Historically speaking Panikkar asserted the Punjab is a British myth and no more the special home of a fighting race than anywhere else in India Over the centuries the historical greatness of India was never identified with a strong Punjab The British should beware of the Punjab myth and of the larger Central Asia myth which had dominated so much of their thought and policy in the past It was necessary to think in post war terms

He then turned to the problem of the Princes As Bikaner's Dewan or Prime Minister and principal adviser Panikkar\* oc

\* Some of Panikkar's most constructive and far seeing ideas are to be found in his monograph The Basis of an Indo Treaty (Oxford University Press 1945)

cupies a key position. He and Sir V. T. Krishnamachari Dewan to the Maharaja of Jaipur have seized the initiative on behalf of the Rajputana Prince. Pannikar admits that Bhopal is in the present Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes : in a difficult position as a Moslem Prince of a Hindu State. But as Chancellor he is really enunciating—although he may not fully realise it—a new doctrine of Paramountcy by asserting that no action should be taken by State individually but only collectively and by agreement with the Chancellor. Pannikar said that his concept of Paramountcy allowed it to be no business of the Chancellor as to whether or not individual Princes opted to have representation in the Constituent Assembly. This was a matter as between each individual State and Britain and only a direct instruction from the Crown Representative would affect his action.

Some ten of the sixteen big States had taken their places in the Constituent Assembly. Pannikar was thinking in the case of the Princes was it necessary on British support. As long as they were instrument in British Policy and Rule, their very powerful factor in the maintenance of the Raj, but once British rule relaxed the Princes' power is automatically in decline and they must seek security within the framework of the dominant political structure which is likely to take its place. The position of the northern group of Princes—Jodhpur, Jaipur, Bikaner, Patiala and Bikaner—was particularly difficult. Patiala was only a hundred and forty miles from Delhi.

Although Nehru during his seven days negotiations with the Princes in February had stressed no fewer than five times the voluntary nature of any agreement with the Congress and Congress refusal to coerce any unwilling partner, the decision facing the Princes was none the less to join or perish. The Nizam of Hyderabad was a special case and while it was highly desirable to bring him into the fold and to handle him firmly, Pannikar recommended no actual coercion. Hyderabad the Premier Indian State with its Moslem ruler was in the heart of Hindustan and had eighty-six per cent of its total population of some ten million Hindus. It would be impossible for her to remain out. The largest State of all in area, Kashmir, was in a difficult position and the Maharaja would no doubt be tempted to throw in his lot with Jinnah. Pannikar said that a key motive for the Princes to join the Constituent Assembly was to provide a reinforcement of the right wing of Congress and a counterweight to J. Prakash Narayan and his Socialist group who have made considerable headway in Bengal.

Finally I asked Pannikar about the social structure of the two Parties and he confirmed the view to which Mountbatten subscribes that the Congress was indeed considerably split. The Moslem League he felt was more loosely integrated, lacking as

it did the extremes of industrial wealth and poverty. The few Moslem magnates were mainly land owners and the exploitation of Moslem poverty was mostly at the hands of Hindu capitalists.

#### VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Friday 28th March 1947*

During his first week as Viceroy Mountbatten has set the tempo he proposes to maintain. By the time March is out he will have held comprehensive individual interviews with every member of the Cabinet as the Viceroy's Executive Council is now colloquially called with Auchinleck and the other Service Commanders-in-Chief with the key Princes and Dewans and with the leaders of the British community and Scheduled Castes. He approaches each of these conversations with a completely open mind and handles them without any formality. The objective is to establish personal relationships where none have existed before. All this is extremely hard work. The interviews are of rarely less than a half hour's duration.

As he is seeing the Leaders in such close sequence the volume of opinion and information which he is absorbing is very heavy so he has established a procedure that as soon as a Leader leaves the room there is a fifteen minutes interval before the next appointment while he dictates to his stenographer a *resume* of his last conversation. These interview notes are given reference numbers and are circulated immediately to his staff enabling us to follow every move he makes.

An opportunity to introduce himself to a wider circle has been presented by the great Asian Relations Conference which has been meeting near the Old Fort in Old Delhi all this week. This evening the Mountbattens gave their first garden party for all the delegates members of the Legislative Assembly and senior officials in Delhi numbering in all some seven hundred guests. The Moghul gardens and the State rooms were crowded with a great number of Congress and other leaders who were seeing the inside of Viceroy's House literally for the first time. This was psychologically a very important party. In the first place it was a clear token of the new Viceroy's goodwill towards Nehru's most ambitious move to assert Indian status in Asian affairs. But beyond that it enabled the Mountbattens to reveal from the outset their splendid social sense and invoke the Indian gift for friendship. As I mingled among the guests I gained no sense of hostility but only of reserve struggling to suppress curiosity. The Mountbattens did much to night to break down that reserve.

Afterwards Lady Mountbatten and Pamela and a party from Viceroy's House went on to an *At Home* in the garden of Nehru's house at 17 York Road where we saw an exquisite display by the famous Chhau or Masque dancers of

## CHAPTER FOUR

### GANDHI AND JINNAH

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Monday 31st March 1947*

I LEFT EARLY for breakfast with the Nehru household. There was an informal atmosphere and we sat down to a European breakfast of eggs and tomatoes, tea and coffee, toast and marmalade. Mrs. P. N. Nehru's charming and brilliant sister with one of her daughters had just arrived from the United Nations session in New York. Krishna Menon of India League of Nations was one of Nehru's closest friends to whom he has given a strong commission at this critical time was there, Aquilino and others. There was another friend present—Mr. Patel, a tractor manufacturer who was pleading with Nehru to open a new factory of his in Bombay. Nehru was weighing in his mind whether he could combine such materialistic ceremony with his principal duty during his next Bombay visit—namely the handing over of some Buddhist relics. Nehru's every quiet spoken and all his reactions in his own home seem to be plain.

After breakfast I had an earnest talk with Krishna Menon who stressed—

(a) The Indian desire for common citizenship but not Dominion Status. He wants what he calls reciprocity. Such are the suspicions about Churchill that if he is prepared to accept Dominion Status it cannot mean real freedom.

(b) The limit of Nehru's patience with the present situation in the Cabinet. The persistent refusal of the Moslem League members to accept him as leader was intolerable.

(c) Preliminary criticism of the Viceroy's I.C.S. staff and in particular of George Abell. I spoke strongly in favour of Abell's high calibre and patent objectivity. Menon admitted that the attacks against him were probably unjustified but must be recognised by Mountbatten as a political reality.

He said Mountbatten started with an advantage vis-à-vis Gandhi who regarded him as an honest man but he gave warning that a connection with the Mahatma was always unpredictable. There was always the danger that it might be sidetracked through Gandhi involving himself in some special subject.

I arrived back just in time for the ten o'clock Staff Meeting where plans for Mountbatten's first interview with Gandhi this

afternoon were fully discussed. Press interest in the meeting is naturally immense. When the Mahatma duly arrived at three o'clock I must have had every accredited camera man in the sub-continent waiting with me in the Moghul gardens outside the Viceroy's study.

After the initial greetings were over the Mountbattens conducted him out to face this battery. He underwent the ordeal with great good humour, joking with the Mountbattens and generally doing his best to meet the conflicting requests of the cameramen all trying to secure the perfect shot. As it happens this was achieved by Max Desfor, the brilliant Associated Press of America photographer who waited until the frenzied scramble for the posed shots was over and then with the perception of the artist saw that Gandhi on turning to go back into the cool study had placed his hand on Lady Mountbatten's shoulder. The picture was his. Gandhi by his action was doing no more and no less than treating Lady Mountbatten in the same manner as his own grand daughters on his way to his Prayer Meetings. Every gesture he makes has consciously or otherwise symbolic meaning and this afternoon it was spontaneous friendship.

Today's talk lasted for two and a quarter hours. At the end of it Mountbatten called me in, introduced me to Gandhi to discuss the immediate issue of a Press communique. Gandhi who spoke with a very soft voice and a slight lisp said he would be happy to leave the wording to the Viceroy. As soon as he had left Mountbatten told me that the whole interview had been deliberately taken up with reminiscence, the first hour and a quarter with Lady Mountbatten present to help produce the air of friendliness and the last hour on their own. He had deliberately avoided all reference to the immediate political situation to allow time for them to progress along the path of understanding and friendship. Gandhi had gone back to his early life in England and South Africa and to his meetings with former Viceroys. Mountbatten told me that the talks are likely to go on for the remainder of Gandhi's week's stay in Delhi. He is quite determined not to hustle him. All this is admirable in itself but not so easy to explain to the Press who will find it difficult to believe that momentous discussions have not in fact taken place.

I hammered out a text with all speed, secured Mountbatten's approval and then went out into the courtyard where a large crowd of correspondents were waiting to take it down. I started to read. Their Excellencies met Mr Gandhi at Viceroy's House this evening and they had a most friendly talk with him lasting for seventy five minutes. Before I could take breath an eager correspondent protested that this could not be true. He knew that the Mahatma had been there for over two hours. There was a murmur in the ranks. But when I continued with 'There-



after His Excellency and Mr Gandhi had an hour's talk alone in the same room. It was generally acknowledged that the statement might after all bear some relation to the truth.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Tuesday 1st April 1947*

Mountbatten himself had his second talk with Gandhi. It lasted for two hours only a quarter of an hour of which was taken up with solid business. There was a further long excursion into the Mahatma's life story and then an astonishing proposal by him to solve the whole problem. It was nothing less than to dismiss the present Cabinet and call on Jinnah to appoint an all Moslem administration. Mountbatten asked 'What will Jinnah's reaction be?' Gandhi replied 'Jinnah will say Ah! it is the only Gandhi agreement.' Mountbatten asked with a smile 'And won't he be right?' 'No' Gandhi replied 'I am being absolutely sincere.' He told Mountbatten that he had got to be firm and face the consequences of the sins of his predecessors. The British system of Divide and Rule had created a situation in which the only alternatives were a continuation of British rule to keep law and order or an Indian blood bath. The blood bath must be faced and accepted.

Wael had been irritated by the time consumed in these interviews but Mountbatten had been busy trying to give ten hours to him if necessary. He is deeply impressed with him and thinks he is still of the first importance.

To-day Mountbatten called me in to act as an unofficial *apporteur* at a very tense and difficult meeting involving the final liquidation of the vexed Indian National Army question. A number of former I.N.A. men were still in prison for war crimes—that is for specific brutalities as against purely political offences. The Government was being subjected to considerable pressure to release them, but Auchinleck as Commander-in-Chief was adamant that these sentences were to be served if discipline was to be maintained. In Bengal the I.N.A. were widely regarded as heroic liberators largely because they had been commanded by Subha Chandra Bose who had once successfully defied Gandhi's opposition to become President of the Congress and who carried his enmity of the British Raj to the point of linking up with the Axis and providing the Japanese with the Indian National Army as an auxiliary force for their offensive on India.

By the time Mountbatten arrived on the scene there was a widespread feeling that this issue should be disposed of but in so far as it touched the Nationalist nerve and had not been too happily handled in the past a reasonable solution became more difficult to obtain as each day passed. Wael had actually used his Viceregal authority to veto discussion of the matter and had handed it over as one of the outstanding conundrums.

Mountbatten decided to have it out in a completely frank conference with Nehru Liaquat Baldev Singh and Auchinleck. The meeting my first direct experience of the prevailing political climate at the highest level is not likely to be in character with most of the crises which Mountbatten will have to face. For once Congress and the Moslem League are on the same side of the fence. One or two of the INA men in question were Moslems. Although the Moslem League had been careful to avoid identifying itself with the Congress Civil Disobedience policy of 1942 or any direct challenge to the Allied war effort it was significant that as soon as there was any suggestion that the issue was one involving national aspirations their differences with the Congress vanished at once.

Nehru was clearly anxious to be rid of the whole problem but was naturally worried at the possible strength of the Legislative Assembly's reaction. Liaquat on the other hand developed arguments which were I felt calculated to draw heavily on Auchinleck's limited reserves of temper and provoke a breach between the Government and the Commander-in-Chief. None the less underneath the surface tension it was clear that there was a tremendous respect for Auchinleck and genuine dismay at the threat of his resignation which had brought the actual crisis to a head. After three hours of intense discussion a formula was found. Auchinleck was prevailed upon to write it out himself. It invoked the Federal Court as an adviser on the merits of each particular outstanding case.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Wednesday 2nd April 1947*

At our morning Staff Meeting Mountbatten was busy hammering out the INA formula. The snag now centres round the status of the Federal Court which apparently is not in a position to render reports to the Commander-in-Chief.

On Mountbatten's instructions I attended the Legislative Assembly sitting discreetly in the Governor General's box to listen to the INA debate. A Moslem back bencher moved the resolution demanding the release of the INA men and started breathing fire and slaughter. His oration then suddenly tailed away. It looked as though the Congress Whips had given him some friendly advice half way through his speech.

Then Nehru replied. His speech was a splendid effort. He backed Auchinleck to the hilt as he promised he would. The speech required great moral courage before a potentially hostile House. The INA he argued was subjected to different pulls. There was the pull of loyalty to the Army there was the pull of a larger loyalty to what one imagined was the good of the country when loyalty is in conflict the result is an inner conflict in the individual. When this happens the best man suffers lesser man is insensitive. Not all the INA men were

as with everyone else there were some good some bad and some in the middle. The resolution was ultimately withdrawn. The outcome of this dangerous incident is Mountbatten's first success at mediation and an encouraging example of Nehru's steadfastness.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Friday 4th April 1947*

The newspaper limelight continues to be on the North West Frontier. Ismay spoke at today's Meeting of what he called the bastard situation there—ninety seven per cent Moslems with a Congress Ministry.

The question arose of Travancore which is in the far South and the only Indian State with a sizeable sea board. Uranium deposits have been found there so the lapse of Paramountcy now assumes new strategic significance.

There was full and frank discussion of ways and means of evacuating Europeans should this be necessary. A register is to be prepared of those who wish to leave by June 1948. Passenger ship shortage is such that any fleet of ships however modest will be out of the question. Mountbatten's directive is that shipping losses as a result of the war should be stressed to all concerned and that all planning any impression of panic movement must at all costs be avoided.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Saturday 5th April 1947*

Gandhi's master plan was discussed and was described as an old kite flown without disguise. Mountbatten however had been the first person sufficiently intelligent to pay attention to it. The vital point was that Mountbatten should not allow himself to be drawn into negotiation with the Mahatma but should only listen to advice.

Now at the end of the first fortnight, the main strategy of Mountbatten's plan together with its tactical application has all ready taken shape. He has had to start from scratch but nothing has been lost. His primary aim is to achieve a solution which inspires sufficient good feeling to enable the Indian parties to remain within the Commonwealth structure from the outset. He is bending every effort to keep the Cabinet Mission Plan alive but on the assumption that Jinnah's power and prestige are sustained the facilities for partition will have to be all set for. He appreciates that the logic of partitioning the centre involves similar treatment for those Provinces where the two communities are evenly balanced.

Whatever shape the Plan takes Mountbatten has been convinced from the outset that the need for the political solution is much more pressing than was apparent when we were in London and that the June 1948 time limit far from being not long enough,

is already too remote a deadline. He senses the danger of political collapse the various contending factions—Congress Moslem League and Sikhs—being strong enough to stake their respective claims but unable unless an agreement is reached at once to prevent the Chinese situation being repeated in India. The quick political solution carries with it the proviso that its difficult administrative implications should be met during an agreed interim period afterwards.

In preparing the way for the acceptable plan Mountbatten is resolved to take all the leaders along with him step by step but he proposes to do so separately on a personal basis and not by formal and forbidding conclaves. Mountbatten hopes that the diplomacy of discussion will have the effect of playing down the communal tension which the committee method as can be seen at the Cabinet meetings of the Interim Government undoubtedly stimulates. In the meanwhile at our Staff Meetings all possible concepts are examined.

This morning the possibility of achieving a solution which leaves something at the centre was considered. Mountbatten mentioned as alternative concepts an alliance on the lines of the League of Nations autonomy within the USSR and the federal structure at Washington. The argument was thrown into the arena that the only chance of a unitary solution would be for a decision to be taken as soon as all data was available if possible within two months. It would have to be in the form of a decision and not an agreement—unilateral from which there was no appeal. The approval of His Majesty's Government would be needed at once together with the earliest possible legislation and implementation so that the scheme could be completed before the end of 1947. This would be the most honest approach and could be presented as the best means of getting out by June 1948. If a scheme was required without a centre then clearly we could not go so quickly.

The whole of this discussion was a form of mental exercise in preparation for Mountbatten's first vital encounter with Jinnah to day.

The morning Meeting went on up to Jinnah's arrival. There were not quite so many photographers as for the first Gandhi interview and Jinnah was obviously far more formal and reserved in his attitude to the Press. Immediately after the meeting was over I got in to see Mountbatten to have my communique approved. There was only one minor alteration.

Jinnah and his sister are dining at Viceroy's House tomorrow evening instead of to night. The reason is simply that Mountbatten felt he could not sustain another session with him to day. Jinnah as he left said he would put himself entirely at Mountbatten's disposal. Mountbatten's first reaction was My he was cold. It took most of the interview to unfreeze

I went straight in to lunch where the guests were Nehru and his daughter Indira and Sjahrir the Indonesian Premier with his buxom blonde Dutch wife. Sjahrir must be the smallest statesman since Dollfuss the Austrian pocket Premier. Mr. and Mrs. Winkelmann the Dutch Attache and his wife were there also. I sat next to Indira. She told me she was in some of the worst blitzes in London and still has an air raid warden's hat which was lent her one evening while she was trying to put out incendiaries in Piccadilly. She has kept the helmet ever since as a trophy.

After lunch Krishna Menon and I may at Mountbatten's request had a preliminary talk about Gandhi's proposal. It was agreed to-day that it was essential to make it clear to Nehru before Gandhi got too worked up on the Congress that Mountbatten was far from committed to the Gandhi plan and that it would need careful scrutiny. At Mountbatten's invitation to the morning Meeting Gandhi has come out definitely for joining Jinnah to form an administration and pledged himself to get Congress support for it. Mountbatten thinks Gandhi's proposals and outlook are similar to those of the phenomenal Mr. Pyke, a scientist at Combined Operations and author of *Habakkuk*, the floating self-propelled shield made of ice—far fetched but potentially feasible.

At a tea party to-day at Western Court I was entertained by Sir Usha Nath Sen, President of the Indian Correspondents' Association, Associated Press of India's special correspondent and a more than usually well-informed source. He introduced me to some twenty leading Indian correspondents who for about an hour and a half gave me a fairly intensive grilling. I got off to a good start by introducing myself as a member of the Liberal Party on temporary leave from party politics and as one who therefore understood the meaning of minority problems. Considerable interest was shown in Mountbatten's personal hobbies. There was a happy almost childlike belief among them all that a solution will be found within the next fortnight and it was difficult to deter them from that.

In the evening I dined with the Mountbattens alone and heard details of the remarkable interview with Jinnah who started off the conversation quite blankly—I will enter into discussion on one condition only. Mountbatten said I interrupted him before he could finish his sentence. Mr. Jinnah I am not prepared to discuss conditions or indeed, the present situation until I have had the chance of making your acquaintance and knowing more about you yourself. Jinnah was completely taken aback by Mountbatten's attitude and for some while did not respond, remaining reserved, haughty and aloof. But in the end his mood softened and he duly succumbed to Mountbatten's desire to hear

him recount the story of the Moslem League's rise to power in terms of his own career

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Monday 7th April 1947*

The Jinnahs dined with the Mountbattens last night. Jinnah harped on Moslem massacres and described the horrors at length. A quick decision was called for— It would have to be a surgical operation. Mountbatten replied: 'An anæsthetic is required before the operation.' Mountbatten emerged from this second encounter reasonably confident. Jinnah can negotiate with me but my decision goes. Jinnah stressed that Gandhi's position was mischievous because it entailed authority without responsibility. To prove this point he went through the history of negotiations with Gandhi ending with the rejection of the Cripps Plan and the launching of civil disobedience in 1942 which he described as the Mahatma's Himalayan blunder. 'The Congress want to inherit everything they would even accept Dominion Status to deprive me of Pakistan.'

Mountbatten is using his Staff Meetings to exercise half-considered ideas. He hammers out his thoughts on the anvil of discussion. It is most exciting to be a part of this creative process. Ismay read out Gandhi's latest letter which contains the germs of a Gandhi Mountbatten Pact conjured up out of nothing more than Mountbatten's sympathetic interest in Gandhi's proposal to let Jinnah form a Government. Mountbatten feels that Jinnah must be brought into the Government, but is not clear how it is to be done.

Apparently while the Mountbattens and Jinnah were being photographed before the first interview Jinnah in an effort to be gallant to Lady Mountbatten spoke of a rose between two thorns. Unfortunately it turned out that he was in the middle himself! Walt Mason of Associated Press of America came round to see me and wants me to be quotable as an official source which frightens me a bit in this whispering gallery.

This evening at the end of their latest meeting Mountbatten called me in to meet Jinnah who stared at me with eyes like gimlets and said nothing. However at Mountbatten's prompting he told me he would be very pleased for me to call on him and discuss Press problems. After he had gone Mountbatten indicated that they would be having a difficult talk to-morrow.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Tuesday 8th April 1947*

At to-day's Staff Meeting a letter from Liaquat was read which alleged the inadequate representation of Moslems in the Armed Forces. He wanted these reorganised forthwith so that they could be more readily split up between Pakistan and at the proper time Ismay stressed that to take any action

Liaquat's letter would be to prejudice the political issue. Unless and unless the Viceroy reported otherwise to His Majesty's Government the Cabinet Mission Plan held the field and that Plan envisaged one National Army.

Mountbatten agreed that there could be no splitting of the Indian Army before the withdrawal of the British for technical reasons. "The mechanics won't permit it and I won't," he said. He was resolved to tell Jinnah that he must maintain law and order and could not help the Parties at the expense of either. Even if it was decided to demit power to individual Provinces it would still be essential to keep central control of Defence. Ismay said the British Army stays until Command passes. The 1935 Constitution remains in force. Mountbatten spoke on Nehru's view of Gandhi's plan--they should not let a strong Centre until there was something to hand over to. Abell said the key question was: Is the Cabinet Mission Plan dead? Tell Jinnah what he will get if he refuses it. He won't be on the line until this has been clarified.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Wednesday 9th April 1947*

At to-day's Meeting Mountbatten said that he raised yesterday with Jinnah the question of an appeal by both of the major Parties for a truce in the communal disturbances and had bluntly asked Jinnah whether he really wanted these disturbances to be stopped or whether the issue of such an appeal would put the Moslem League at a political disadvantage. Jinnah had ultimately agreed to join.

I was asked to give the Press a background warning that since the Viceroy was examining a large number of different plans for the future of India the Press should be on their guard against assuming that the plan known and believed to be under discussion on any day was the one most likely to be decided on. The plan which was receiving most careful examination was of course the Cabinet Mission Plan.

We had another policy discussion. Ismay spoke of a talk he had had with Jinnah. He showed himself wholly unaware of the administrative implications of his policy. The British were liquidators. All would be well if Pakistan was conceded but Jinnah spoke of his fear that all he would get would be a "moth-eaten Pakistan."

After the Staff Meeting I went round and saw Jinnah at his home. His house at 10 Angeles Road looked rather like a mosque and is filled with black and white inlay. On his mantelpiece was a silver map of India and a clock plaque. Pakistan was marked in green. He was much more cordial than on the first encounter. We discussed the Press situation. The All India Editors Conference he said was entirely Hindu. Of the Moslem papers there was only *Dawn* which was under his proprietorship.

ship Although you may not believe it I have never exercised direct influence over its policy and have always regarded that as the Editor's job and within his competence The Editor he added without a smile has always been in agreement with my views He spoke at length on the completely false reports of the Noakhali killings of Hindus by Moslems These were first described as a massacre of many thousands but he claimed they turned out to be little more than a hundred killed and a hundred wounded Background talks with the Press in India were almost impossible He spoke of his experience in London where his off the record remarks were completely respected

In a note of the interview for Mountbatten I wrote as follows —

In view of the inaccurate and inflammatory nature of some recent Press comment I said that I had in mind to recommend that you should send a message to the All India Editors Conference urging the need for restraint etc. I wanted to see what his reaction would be It was not particularly favourable If I may presume to advise he said 'His Excellency should press on with his work, reach a decision quickly and avoid exhortations It is above all his sacred duty to uphold law and order The interview was helpful in so far as it will enable me to make contact with the Moslem Press under favourable auspices but discouraging as indicating that the chances of any working arrangement between the Hindu and the Moslem Press are very small indeed

I had tea this afternoon with the Nehru household Indira and Krishna Menon recalled the origins of the Moslem League and its leadership—pointing out that Jinnah himself was a Hindu by birth The League Krishna said only began to mean something when Congress became a Direct Action movement It grew he alleged under British encouragement Krishna wants me to go to the States Conference at Gwalior where Nehru is handing over the Presidency to Sheikh Abdullah the Moslem Congress leader in Kashmir who is at present in gaol there It is not only the political temperature that is rising The thermometer reached over 100° F yesterday As Nehru aptly remarked to me 'The trouble is we get hot by thinking about the heat

In the evening we had a big State dinner for the British Residents in the Indian States who have been called to Delhi for consultation with Mountbatten in his capacity as Crown Representative The State rooms were opened up and the cobwebs dusted off Lady Willingdon's Persian ceiling Eighty four guests sat down to dinner and the silver plate was brought out which somehow did not improve the flavour of the food Portraits of former Viceroys—Minto Mayo Halifax and Reading—look down upon the swelling scene The string band plays a strange of Gilbert and Sullivan and Indian rhythms



VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI Sat day 12th April 1947

Mountbatten reported on his latest meeting with Jinnah who was apparently much shaken when Mountbatten failed to react in any way to his offer dramatically presented to bring Pakistan into the Commonwealth. In our general discussion to-day the alternatives of Plan Bikan versus Plan Union were frankly and fully discussed. Mountbatten went to the root of the dilemma and put the proposition that he should try to get Congress to accept the Cabinet Mission Plan in full and then confront Jinnah with coming in or accepting truncated Pakistan. George Abell was sceptical of Congress changing its policy. It had already forced the Moslem League to retreat by the pressure it had exerted on the northern Groups.

Gandhi has written to Mountbatten that his own plan is not acceptable to Congress and that he is personally holding over all future negotiations to the Working Committee. Mountbatten says he will try to get Gandhi to stay on and exert his influence in favour of full Congress acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan. He feels that deep desire for union still exerts a powerful pull on Congress.

Cidentally there was a charming postscript to Gandhi's proposal that Mr Asaf Ali should meet Lady Mountbatten. Lady Mountbatten at once wrote off an invitation which Mrs Asaf Ali duly declined. The next day when Gandhi came for a meeting with the Viceroy Mrs Asaf Ali was with him. I hear she refused. He said so I have brought her with me.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI Mo day 14th April 1947

The Press speculators have been busy. An article in the *Hindustan Times* this morning has forecast the issue of the Peace Appeal on which Mountbatten has been working. It indicates that it will shortly be issued over the signatures of Gandhi, Jinnah and Kripalani as the President of Congress. One of the big points at issue is Congress's insistence on including Kripalani and Jinnah's unwillingness to do so. Ismay and Maxwell consider that the *Hindustan Times* article may well have wrecked the chance of persuading Jinnah to sign the document which has been prepared. Mountbatten gave strict instruction to me to point out that the article had of course been published without his knowledge and had caused him great annoyance. He indeed has. He is also writing to Nehru to find out how the leak occurred.

After many spasms of uncertainty Mountbatten's patience and will power have prevailed and this afternoon I have been able to take round to the Ministry of Information the original document over Gandhi's and Jinnah's joint signatures. Jinnah has gained his point over Kripalani who has not been invited to

sign. Actually Gandhi wrote his name twice once in English and once in Urdu

The tone and timing of this Appeal are a great personal triumph for Mountbatten and give impetus to his whole effort to produce an acceptable political plan. It enhances his prestige and it exploits to the maximum the initial good will surrounding him. It is designed to create a *detente* without which no political solution will be worth a pin's fee. It is the first victory for his open diplomacy.

The message is couched in stern and forceful terms which are urgently needed. The call for avoidance both in speech and writing of any incitement to acts of violence and disorder is particularly timely. As each day passes certain of the more communally minded Press commentators become increasingly provocative in their language stirring up hatreds they cannot control and heroics they are never likely to perform. At Mountbatten's request I have gone very carefully into the Ministry of Information's proposals for disseminating the Appeal. The engine of All India Radio will be at full throttle and at my suggestion to-night's release will include a photostat copy. Ambitious plans are in hand to show it at cinemas and to distribute it by leaflet from the air over the disturbed areas.

The planned pattern of events now centres round a Simla house party early in May—the probable guests to be Nehru, Jinnah, Patel, Liaquat, Kripalani, Baldev Singh and the possibles Gandhi, Bhopal and Bikaner.

To-morrow the Governors' Conference is due to take place following closely upon a useful session with the Residents. Mountbatten is not likely to put his Plan into final shape until he has heard the Governors' full and frank views on the draft which he has already sent for their consideration. On the eve of the Conference the broad principles of Mountbatten's Plan are

(1) that the responsibility for Partition if it comes is to rest fairly upon the Indians themselves

(2) the Provinces generally speaking shall have the right to determine their own future

(3) Bengal and the Punjab are to be notionally partitioned for voting purposes

(4) the predominantly Moslem Sylhet district in Assam is to be given the option of joining the Moslem Province created by a partitioned Bengal

(5) General Elections are to be held in the North west Frontier Province

Some of the Governors have arrived at Viceroy's House and Mountbatten has already had talks with Sir Frederick Bourne (Central Provinces), Sir John Colville (Bombay) and Sir Archibald

bald Nye (Madras) By the time they are all here the Mountbatten will be entertaining under one roof eleven Governors, their wives, private secretaries and ADCs—a formidable gathering even for Viceroy's House with its three hundred and forty rooms and one and a half miles of corridors to hold.

Sir Muzaffar Ali, the Prime Minister of Hyderabad, was called in for the talk with Batten when they discussed the very tricky question of the status of Berar. This is part of the Nizam of Hyderabad's hereditary domain—indeed his heir is entitled the Prince of Berar—but administered by the Central Province. Congress will certainly lay claim to Berar as part of the Central Province, while the Nizam will certainly want Berar back. Muzaffar Ali intimates that the Nizam may hastily be seeing John. As for himself, he says that he is rapidly losing the Nizam's confidence and does not expect to be there much longer.

I sat next to him at the Mountbatten's lunch party. He is a Muslim of moderate opinions, sober judgment and high intelligence. He is the efficient, somewhat isolated person. He spoke quite freely to me about the uneasy role of Premier to the Nizam. The maximum period of power could hardly be for weeks at a time. The only exception to this had been Lord Mountbatten, who had clung on for nearly fourteen years. The Nizam's status is a tangled web of weaving complex conspiracies against his own Prime Minister, and ultimately depending on the power he had wrung from them. It was by Jinnah's account a depressing cycle of self-defeating intrigue. Also, the Linch was Crompton Mackenzie, who, covering the world's battlefronts to produce an official account of the Indian Army's contribution to the war.

Colville it seems began by offering to resign but has been prevailed upon to stay a little longer. Mountbatten said that Colville was likely to be both wrong and right in his objections to the present policy. Wrong because only short notice and a time limit could make the Indian leaders face up to reality and right because there was not enough time to launch a new constitution.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE GOVERNORS AND THE PLAN

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI Tuesday 15th April 1947

THE GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE opened today with the boost of encouragement provided by the banner he dines announcing the

**Gandhi Jinnah Appeal** I attended the first session which took place in the sombre panelled Council Chamber. It was an impressive spectacle with the eleven Governors seated in anti clockwise order of precedence round the large oval table. Mountbatten's opening speech was a very fluent and persuasive appeal for loyalty both to the letter and spirit of the British Government's decision. He stressed just in case there was any doubting Thomas in his midst that June 1948 was a firm departure date.

There was full and frank discussion on the evacuation of Europeans. Colville and Nye, Governors of the two Senior Presidencies, were both robust on this issue but Sir Evan Jenkins, the very brilliant Governor of the Punjab—George Abell's predecessor as P.S.V. to Wavell—said he felt bound to draw attention to the seriousness of the situation in the Punjab. Sir Hugh Dow, Governor of Bihar, said there were only fifty European officials in his State covering a population of forty million. So it was not surprising perhaps that there was little law or order in his part of the world. Sir Andrew Clow, the retiring Governor of Assam, spoke about the planters and said there were more young wives than ever before enjoying the sunshine, food and servants.

J. D. Tyson, Secretary to the Governor of Bengal, Sir Frederick Burrows (who was ill and unable to be at the Conference) reported that there were twenty thousand Europeans in Bengal and that he was seriously worried about the five thousand in the outlying districts. He felt that the chances of maintaining law and order in the Province were very slim. Communist agitation—stronger here than anywhere else—was definitely anti-European and he believed that the Europeans were not looking ahead.

Mountbatten stressed that there was little chance of any support from the British Cabinet for any legislation to prevent people coming to India. The final vote on this delicate subject was in favour of using persuasion with regard to the movement of Europeans, with the Punjab asking for enforcement powers later.

There followed detailed consideration of the vexed question of compensation. Mountbatten gave the history of the negotiations to date. Colville—George, the automatic pilot, as he called himself to cover the various occasions he has served as acting Viceroy—confirmed what Mountbatten had to say about the difficulty of getting compensation for Indians past the Interim Government. Trivedi and Hydar both felt Indians would on purely patriotic grounds wish to remain on and let compensation go. Mountbatten had some interesting things to say about the ambiguities and uncertainties of the Commonwealth link referring in particular to Eire. Sir John Maffey had told him that the Letter of Credence of the Irish representative to Hitler during the war was actually signed George R.I.

In the afternoon session discussion was broken down to allow for reports by Governors on their individual Provinces. Sir Olaf Caroe speaking about the North west Frontier which at the moment seems to be the point of most acute political crisis wants an election. Dr Khan Sahib the Premier who with his more famous brother Abdul Ghaffar Khan the Frontier Gandhi leads the pro-Congress Red Shirt group does not. All the pro Moslem League Moslems who would stand to gain most from an election are in gaol. Mountbatten's advisers hold your hand if possible but Caroe looks tense and tired and is clearly weighed down by his heavy responsibilities.

Jenkins gave a detailed analysis of the implications of Punjab partition showing just how the Moslem versus non Moslem issue was complicated by Sikh and Hindu Jat claims. Tyson similarly examined the prospects for Bengal if under partition East Bengal he felt, would become rural. There were some twenty five million Hindus in Bengal—forty five per cent of the population—and they all wanted to be absorbed into Hindustan. The concept of East Bengal was unacceptable to many local Moslems. The relationship between Jinnah and the present Moslem Premier of Bengal Suhrawardy as far from cordial. Suhrawardy is frightened of partition and is ready to play with the Hindus. Jenkins too spoke of the possible growth of anti-Pakistan opinion in the Punjab and Bengal. The local Moslems would be satisfied to run Bengal as a Moslem-controlled Province.

The Governor of Bihar drew attention to the concentration of wealth in coal and iron. The industrial development of Chhatis Nagpur was part of Suhrawardy's concept for the building up of an independent Bengal. Provincial devolution would he felt, in the case of Bihar have wide repercussions. In the general discussion it was felt that a South Punjab Pakistan was economically feasible. Mountbatten considered however that East Bengal might contract out and that also the North west Frontier was a liability.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI Wednesday 16th April 1947

At the resumed Governors Conference to-day Jenkins spoke about the need for an Operation Solomon for the Punjab and put forward the possibility of a statistical boundary commission. There was a big discussion on the whole draft Partition Plan which Mountbatten had put together in time for the Conference. It is clear from what the Governors have to say, that by far the greater part of the sub-continent is calm and quiet and ready to accept a very reasonable solution.

I had lunch at the Imperial with Pankaj who stressed that the Constitution of the Moslem League had been weighted heavily in favour of Moslems living in minority areas. This simple fact he claimed had enabled Jinnah to bring extra pressure

sure on Moslem members living in majority areas Bengali loyal ties he said were increasingly cutting across those of Hindustan and would require careful handling He also argued strongly the need for an Indian equivalent to the British Privy Council to which unpredictable political and judicial problems could be referred

Mountbatten has had a talk with Baldev Singh the Defence Minister who in the presence of Jenkins the Governor of the Punjab denied being the treasurer of the Sikhs appeal fund which is undoubtedly being subscribed for warlike and unconstitutional purposes

Baldev sought advice on the Army nationalisation scheme What chance was there of British Services remaining on after June 1948? Mountbatten replied that it all depended on whether India wants to be in the Commonwealth A face saving formula is needed to cover the Congress resolution passed prior to 20th February to set up a sovereign independent Republic Baldev's general attitude goes to confirm that partition is now the only solution acceptable to all parties

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Friday 18th April 1947*

Mountbatten was in buoyant mood at today's Staff Meeting He had an interesting talk with Krishna Menon who took upon himself part of the original responsibility for the Independent Sovereign Republic formula The search however for another formula which will ensure a close link with Britain is being actively pursued by him and some of the Congress leaders Menon has explained how initiative on Congress's part is impossible even the semblance of it would lose them their position it must come in some way from us In the course of the discussion I said I felt that at the military level the analogy and advantages of the Combined Chiefs of Staff procedure in the war should not be overlooked and Mountbatten agrees that this should certainly be kept in mind

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Saturday 19th April 1947*

Mountbatten gave us an alarming but none the less amusing account of his interview with the Sikh leaders He found himself confronted by some very scruffy old gentlemen with long beards and large *kirpans* who put on their glasses looking just like benign professors full of peaceful intentions but telling a few fibs in the process They all insisted that he must partition the Punjab and said the Sikhs were the principal victims in the Rawalpindi riots

Mountbatten mentioned the interview he had yesterday with Dr Matthai who had stressed that although responsible Indian leaders were now generally making dispassionate and temperate speeches the Press was causing much trouble and was in his view

an irresponsible and inflammatory element in the situation. Matthai suggested that the Viceroy should call together all the leaders and appeal to them to find in their comment and implementation their own way the Gandhi Jinnah Appeal. Dr. Matthai thought that this would have a tremendous effect. Mountbatten asked for my comment. I said that I doubted whether this approach was either feasible or even desirable. It would be physically very difficult to bring in all the editors concerned from distant parts and when they had arrived at Viceroy's I requested they should expect to be told of some firm decision. They would, to say the least, be deflated at receiving only an exhortation. Moreover I suggested the desirability of taking the matter up with Patel in the first instance in his capacity as Minister of Information.

At his meeting yesterday with Dr. Khan Sahib the suggestion was mooted that Mountbatten should pay an early visit to the North West Frontier Province. The decision there had been to postpone it until the major Jhalabad campaign was completed and approved but the Frontier situation seems to call for special treatment beforehand. In our general policy decision on the Dominion Status issue was further threatened. Mountbatten pointed out that Nazimuddin the Muslim League leader in East Bengal, as just as dangerous as Jinnah about Pakistan. Ismay stressed that we were engaged in creating two Pakistan. He drew from Mountbatten the comment that the white paper is implausible. It was beginning to thank Pakistan as inevitable.

In the evening the Mountbattens gave a small dinner in the walled garden by the swimming pool for Pamela's eighteenth birthday. The fall of fountains and the glimmer of lights, the rustle of a daisy fresh the dark green cypress trees red roses climbing on white walls and the red and gold of the Viceroy's servants—her was all one could ask of an enchanted garden.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI Monday 21st April 1947

Mountbatten rehearsed his afternoon meeting with Liaquat and said that his final decision on a to whether there should be a fresh election in the North West Frontier Province would depend upon his estimate of the Muslim League's ability to form a responsible Ministry. He said he would make it abundantly clear that in spite of appeals he would not in fact yield to force or to the threat of force.

I have been asked to prepare a Press note announcing the forthcoming Frontier tour.

The Mountbattens gave a small dinner at the Hotel for the Brockmans, Nicholls and Urselers which was directly preceded by a garden party at the Viceroy's establishment. Mountbatten told us that he had been much shaken to learn that the three hundred and seventy-five guests were all of the officer cadre and

that there were in all some seven thousand persons on the Vice regal estate. He said he had told some of them that they ought to have a Mayor and had then added that he supposed he was their Mayor! This seemed to go down well with the guests and showed he felt that the Indian had a sense of humour or at least the good manners to laugh at the right time.

While we were in the drawing room before dinner Lady Mountbatten confessed that she found herself continually trying to move the heavy teak framed chairs and sofas only to be no less continually discovered by the servants in this undignified attempt! In this connection she quoted the experience of Lady Lintithgow whose dog had had an unfortunate accident on the Viceregal carpet shortly before the guests were due to arrive. It took so long to find a servant of sufficiently low caste to clear up the mess that she was finally obliged to deal with it herself and was caught by her guests and servants in the act!

During dinner an officer's name was mentioned and Lady Mountbatten exclaimed. Let us see him by all means but don't let him arrange any more tours for us. She then told a story of a trip in the Arakan when the said hapless officer forgot that the river was tidal and she and Elizabeth Ward had to leave their jeep and swim for it to keep their engagement!

Mountbatten told me that the interview with Liaquat had been very interesting. Liaquat had spoken with much frankness about Wavell saying they all knew that he was a very great soldier but he had undoubtedly made his political position impossible for himself with the Indian leaders when they all went to London last December. On that occasion he had apparently taken an apologetic line by asserting that he was merely a soldier and that he had made mistakes. After such a confession it became obvious Liaquat said that he could no longer carry on and it was immediately after this that the idea of a successor began to come into the picture.

Mountbatten told us he felt it was a very great pity that if he had to have this job he could not have taken it on eighteen months ago. He might then have been able to influence events but now with the time at our disposal this was almost impossible. There had been a catastrophic deterioration in the situation during the past few months and political solutions must be found within the time limit and therefore before one could really hope to influence events.

In a general talk about the Press I used the occasion to stress the importance of hard news ahead of time which enabled us to control speculation and mentioned in this connection our success with the Governors Conference. I also underlined my conviction of the importance of Patel in the situation. Altogether Mountbatten was in very good form throughout the evening.



VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Tuesday 22nd April 1947*

Mountbatten said to day that representatives of approximately half of the inhabitants of India had already asked to be admitted to remain within the Commonwealth. They included the Muslims—Leaguers, the Scheduled Castes and the Indian States—though half the States' subjects might not be of the same opinion as the Leaguers. All these applicants he added seemed to think they were doing Great Britain a favour by asking to stay in. Mountbatten went on to enquire whether it was considered that there was any possibility of granting some form of Dominion Status to India as a whole or more probably to the separate parts of India in the near future. He envisaged the setting up of a Defence Council and a Government-General as chairman. The latter vote Ismay thought should not rule out unilateral application by Pakistan for Commonwealth membership. Mountbatten directed that the plan for the grant of Dominion Status to India, whether united or divided before June and possibly by January 1948 should continue concurrently with the Plan for the final decision.

He has come round to the view to-day that the Cabinet Ministers on Partition cannot be resurrected in new form and name. A dogmatically persisted it was psychologically wrong. If the principle of two or more States could be accepted, it might be achieved through sovereignty. We had to recognise that the Muslim League were prepared to give up the British Commonwealth (full Pakistan area) and to accept a truncated Pakistan if a real free centre went with it.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Wednesday 23rd April 1947*

This morning Mountbatten had a three-hour session with Jinnah.

He seemed to be resigned to the partition of the Punjab and Bengal. He did not ask what the boundaries would be and Mountbatten did not tell him. He is putting out an appeal to reason in the North-West Frontier Province and is clearly pleased that he is being asked to call off Direct Action. He told Mountbatten: 'Frankly Your Excellency the Hindus are responsible. They always want seven annas for the rupee.'

Mr. Jinnah Azad the leading Congress Muslim has put forward a new formula. It is that Mountbatten's personal interpretation of the British Government's statement following the London meeting with the Indian Leaders and Wavell 1st December 1946 is the right of Provinces to opt out if Groups would be acceptable. He bases this on a dictum of Gandhi's: 'The sole referee of the case is not in the interests of India as a whole will be Mountbatten in his personal capacity.'

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Friday 25th April 1947*

At to day's Staff Meeting the first draft of the Plan was considered but no clear concept for its final projection on the Parties and the public emerged. Ian Scott raised an important debating point favouring the widest publicity for it prior to its submission to the Working Committees of the two Parties who would then have the searchlight of world attention focused upon them. This technique might have the effect of drawing the more moderate elements in both Congress and Moslem League together again to preserve the bare essentials of unity.

Mountbatten agreed that it was most important that with the issue of the announcement the impression should not be created that partition was a foregone conclusion but that the question had been referred for decision to the will of the people. To improve the chances of a return to a united India he felt that an escape clause should be included in the announcement and he would consider as counting as a form of union any plan in which the centre dealt with the same subjects as in the Cabinet Mission Plan—namely External Affairs, Defence and Communications. The crux of the matter seemed to him to be that in the Cabinet Mission Plan the Hindu majority at the centre would be able permanently to outvote the Moslem minority and use the reserved subjects to subdue them. The alternative was that the representatives of Pakistan and Hindustan should come together on the basis of parity. If this form of a united India could be obtained it might be possible for the Punjab, Bengal and Assam to remain united. Abell pointed out that it would not be real parity which depended on the relative strength of the two sovereign States. Mountbatten replied that he realised this point. My object is to create the effect of two sovereign States or separate blocks negotiating at the centre rather than having a system of majority voting.

Among the various points raised by Mountbatten whose mind ranged over the whole problem with much vigour and originality were forebodings about the future of Calcutta. He felt that the Moslems would be bound to demand a plebiscite for it and that its fate would become a major issue. It would however be most undesirable to lay down the procedure of self determination here which might well give the wrong answer.

He reports that Patel has been complaining: "You won't govern yourself and you won't let us govern." But in fact we are aiming at a date as early as 19th May for the decisive meeting with the Leaders.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Saturday 26th April 1947*

Mountbatten has decided to send Ismay and George Abell back to London with the first draft of the Plan to hammer it out clause by clause with the Government and officials concerned.

giving background guidance about this trip I am to explain that one of Mountbatten's principal objects in leaving India is to see Mr. Meville on his staff is in order to improve liaison with Whitehall and to enable them to visit London alternately at approximately two-monthly intervals. It is understood that the first to return will be Lord Ismay.

The *Commonwealth* issue is becoming large. There has been a first indication of Patil's policy on this subject in the leading article of to-day's *Hindustan Times*. Ismay drew attention to the relevant extract which runs as follows —

If there is a settlement between the Congress and the League as a result of which the Muslim majority areas are alloted to constitute themselves into separate sovereign States we have no doubt that the Union will not stand in the way of British establishing contacts with those States. It must be clearly understood however that the Indian Union will consider as a hostile act if there is any attempt by Britain to conclude any treaty or alliance involving military or political clauses.

Mountbatten's line on this is that he has received no instructions as to the attitude he should adopt in the event of one or more parts of India expressing a desire to remain within the Commonwealth. But His Majesty's Government had clearly enjoined him not to enter into any discussion on this matter which might imperil the chances of Indian unity to attain which had always been the first aim and objective of the Government.

Bob Sum on the BBC's special correspondence in India has shown me his latest script relayed throughout the day. All the BBC news bulletins. One most important fact he said is that the Indians still tend to be overlooked in the rush of day-to-day news is that Indian attitude towards Britain has undergone a fundamental change in the last two months. The good will established by Britain's Quit India statement has been consolidated by the new Viceroy's five industrious weeks.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI 5 day 27th April 1947

George Abell is back from his trip in Lahore where he reported a serious situation. Jenkins probably the ablest administrator in India considers there is a grave danger of civil war. When asked by George whether there was anything else we could do but leave in June 1948 Jenkins admitted that there was no alternative but there was a real possibility that we could be handed over to chaos.

From Calcutta comes the news that John Christie, Joint Private Secretary to the Viceroy has failed to sell the Begli section of the Plan to Burows who was standing out for the doctrine of a free city of Calcutta. He describes its installation after June 1948.

as mandatory This seems to be a strange word to apply to a situation over which we shall have no control whatever at that time

## CHAPTER SIX

### FRONTIER VISIT

GOVERNMENT HOUSE PESHAWAR *Monday 28th April 1947*  
EARLY THIS MORNING I set off by air with the Viceregal party for Peshawar It was a bumpy journey and Pamela and myself in particular were both feeling somewhat green on arrival The most impressive spectacle on the way up was the mighty Nanga Parbat which we could see from the air over a hundred miles away to the north rising in perfect symmetry to some twenty five thousand feet overtopping by at least ten thousand feet the surrounding peaks We touched down just after midday

On arrival at Government House where we were anticipating a nice quiet lunch prior to an afternoon of steady conference we found ourselves confronting a situation of crisis bordering on panic Sir Olaf Caroe the Governor in a state of some agitation advised us that there was an immense Moslem League demonstration less than a mile away which was to place its grievance before the Viceroy and was ready to risk breaking the law by forming a procession and marching on Government House The only alternative according to Caroe was for the Viceroy to forestall this plan by marching on them and showing himself to the multitude The demonstrators were estimated at well over seventy thousand and had been gathering from the most remote parts of the Province many of them having been on the march for several days Mountbatten had a brief council of war with Caroe and the Premier Dr Khan Sahib and it was agreed that the Viceroy should show himself without delay

Mountbatten thereupon drove off to the demonstration Lady Mountbatten with great courage insisting on going with him The crowd confronting us was certainly formidable We climbed up the railway embankment close to the historic Fort Bala Hissar and looked down upon a vast concourse gathered at Cunningham Park and stretching away into distant fields There was much gesticulation and the waving of innumerable but illegal green flags with the white crescent of Pakistan accompanied by a steady chant of Pakistan Zindabad

Within a few minutes of our arrival however the brooding tension lifted The slogan changed Mountbatten could be heard and cheers were raised Sullen faces

nearly half an hour Mountbatten in his khaki shirt and Lady Mountbatten also in a bush shirt stood waiting to the crowd which had a surprisingly large number of women and children in it midst. Any sort of speech was out of the question. But the impact of the friendly confident personalities on that fanatical assembly had to be seen to be believed.

As we swarmed down the embankment and drove back to a well-earned lunch the relief of the Governor and local officials could not be concealed. They told us that it could have been quite beyond the resources of the local police and military to have deflected the crowd peaceably if they had made up their collective mind to invade Government House. As it was after seeing the Mountbattens they struck camp and returned to their homes.

After lunch Mountbatten began a series of exciting interviews. I was present for two of them, one with Khan Sahib and his Cabinet of four Ministers and the other with a deputation of local Hindu residents. He also met the local Moslem League leaders from whom special dispensation was made to leave gaol in order to see him. Suspended upon this conflict which was in itself sufficiently serious to become the focal point of the wider struggle between Congress and the Moslem League was the very difficult relationship between the Governor and his Congress Prime Minister. This friction also had wider implications at the national level.

Mountbatten's diplomatic resilience was shown to good advantage in his encounter with Khan Sahib and his colleagues to which the Governor was also present. He began by saying how grateful he was for the opportunity of meeting them in person. He would ask them and they could ask him questions. He appreciated Khan Sahib's public-spirited advice that he should go to meet the demonstrators. He had made it clear that he would stand on the embankment. He had previously refused Jinnah's permission to organise a procession to Government House. Khan Sahib in his desire was anxious to confirm that he had called off a procession of Red Shirts—the Congress mass movement in the Province and counterpart of the Moslem League. Give Shirts? That sat in.

Mountbatten added that he had come to the conclusion that Indians transfer power in accordance with the will of the people. He was already devising machinery for dealing with the Punjab and Bengal but he added "The Front position is particularly difficult for me. I shall be telling the Moslem League that I will not yield to violence. I tell you pretty much that I think elements are necessary but I can make no firm guarantee to the Moslems that there will be any Jinnah's promise; that if there is any election there will be no violence. You must trust my integrity. Jinnah accepts the position and is asking his followers to call off civil disobedience. Mountbatten asked about

the general control exercised by the Moslem League High Command. The reply was that the local Moslem League had run riot and taken charge. At the last election the Moslem League had definitely been defeated on the Pakistan issue and even Rab Nishtar, a Moslem League leader of the first rank at the national level, was not returned. Then the Congress policy of Quit India had won but that cry no longer held the people together and many who had originally supported Congress were now looking ahead and wondering whether they would come under Hindu control.

When Khan Sahib turned to the question of Pathanistan the discussion became somewhat disjointed and explosive. Gandhi has for some time been actively interested in this concept and has lately been stressing its virtues with renewed vigour. If it were to prevail it would create a new frontier nationalism cutting across the Province's communal and political solidarity with Pakistan. If you destroy the Pathan nation, warned Khan Sahib, terrible things will happen.

Mountbatten went on to ask why there was no coalition government in the North West Frontier Province. Khan Sahib replied heatedly. If Congress want a coalition I shall not remain in Mountbatten hastened to add. I was asking for information only. Our people are very poor. Khan Sahib continued. The Moslem League here represent only self interest and a very privileged class of Khans. Caroe pointed out. There are some very wealthy Congress supporters as well.

Mountbatten inquired about the state of communal feeling in the Province. Caroe replied. The Moslem masses are protecting Hindus and Sikhs except of course in Hazara. The hearts and minds of the Moslems are sound. Khan Sahib alleged that Moslems had been allowed by officials to break the law. Caroe replied firmly that he knew of no single instance where officials were not trying to do their duty but they were always blamed.

Following a discussion on constitutional procedure with complaints from the Governor of unjustifiable executive pressure on the part of the Prime Minister and from the Prime Minister of interference in the Government on the part of the Governor, Mountbatten intervened to say. I am out here to do a job with no axe to grind. I want to transfer power in terms of the will of the people. Ideally I would have a plebiscite here but there is no time. He then discussed the implications of demission to the Provinces, partition generally and in relation to the North West Frontier Province and the solemn duty placed upon him. My problem, he added, is whether to hold an election before we go or whether law and order are sufficient for the Government to hold on. He suggested a joint committee of the two High Commands to advise on elections. The British, he said, always carried the day but he reiterated that his mandate was

ty Altogether it was a ten and taut session hch tested  
Mo ntibatten resou ces to the f ll

No soon r as this meeting with the M nst over than ve  
ent red into a session with local Hindu representatives. They  
explained th t the r deputation as more communal th n polical  
or anti Mo lem Leagu and th y made it clear that they were  
n t concerned with the f t of the M nstry but with the life nd  
security of nnocent Hind s nd Skhs Mountbatten I am  
trying to g t t the facts D you supp rt the ernment?  
The Hindus We are p eared to lie at peace under any  
Go ernment Mountbatten I am gl d of this sensbl attitude  
I am trying to act constitutionally Th re ver complaints about  
the lack of polc h ere str tched to the utmost. Four  
B g des w r th d b t th r w re murders in Peshawar nd  
l ck of any eff ct v pol ct n Mountbatten stressed the  
d nger of using oldiers n pl ce of police The t vo had differ  
t functions He added that there w at th s moment m re  
troops in the N rth w st Front r Province than nyw re l in  
Inda and Caroe added th t m r us was b ing made of them  
th n t y t m in h s twenty fi e years experience even in l d  
in 1930-31 M nst th d that he was out to get the l rger  
f t n d nd the unce tainty but t wo ld h ve t be a  
s lut on acceptabl t all

I was not able to stay on for the third meeting this time with the Muslim League leaders peacefully released from gaol for the occasion. Among the delegates were the young and fanatical Prof. M. N. S. R. and Khair Abdul Quayyum Khan. I understood from I. N. S. that they spoke at great length and with enthusiasm hence Mountbatten has wisely given in instruction that they should all be lodged in one cell so that they can meet and consult each other. I am agreed with their proposal that they should be allowed to go to Delhi on parole for consultation with Jinnah.

I was for some time heavily engaged in drafting and securing approval for President's Commission during the days preceding his departure. It was likely to come in at the tail end of a reception given by D. Khan Sahib. Later in the evening there was a dinner party in Government House attended by all members of the Government and leading Indian military officials paying tribute as one of the guests at this little bout of Viceroyial splendour. The Peshwa who I saw was Brigadier Sir H. Muddiah Khan a famous local leader and personality, more than an Anglophile than the British. Mustering all his medals and dressed in archaic regimental uniform he made a fine showing and recalled past glories. He told me that the first Viceroy he had served was Curzon and that his first assignment was as a very junior officer of the garrison outside the great main bedroom. It was not an easy job for Curzon was such a light sleeper that

the officers of the guard and the sentries had to put felt over their boots to avoid disturbing him

# GOVERNMENT HOUSE PESHAWAR AND RAWALPINDI

*Tuesday 29th April 1947*

After an early breakfast we set off for a tour of the Khyber and for the *Jirga* at Jamrud. We passed the famous Islamia College where a few years ago Ian Scott had been the Principal. On the way back we were regaled by cries of "Pakistan Zindabad" from a number of the students who were perhaps alive to the important role their college could play in the training of much needed officials for the new State they were so fervently hailing. We passed the fort where the Guru Hari Singh is buried and were told how on his death his body had been propped up in Jamrud for all to see. We then came to the great Jamrud Fort hewn out of the rocks—the garrison of the Khyber Rifles.

All the way on our twelve mile journey the *khashidars* were spaced out guarding both sides of the road from nearby hillocks. They were a tribal police force about one thousand six hundred strong who were encouraged to keep order among their warlike brothers through sharing in Government benefits. The Afridis have apparently squatted on the Pass ever since the days of classical Greece. Their system of rule was described as being one of heredity based on character which if it is accepted is as stable a system as any. Mr Lewis explained that we were moving up into the heart of the Pathan kingdom which had two ethnic boundaries—the Hindu Kush and the Indus. We reached the top of the Pass at Charbagh and from there we looked out into Afghanistan. Lady Mountbatten told me she first came to the Khyber as a girl of nineteen and was very much of a pioneer in doing so. Each detail of the rugged route had remained vivid in her memory.

We then turned back to Landi Kotal where Mountbatten met the tribal *Jirga* of *Maliks* (elders) representing the Afridi Shinwari Zakahe Malikdin Sipah Salmani and Kullaghori clans. The scene provided an extraordinary contrast with the bleak austere grandeur of the Pass itself. Landi Kotal camp indeed was just like a leafy Sussex village in summer time. The *Jirga* itself was a colourful assembly. Many of the tribesmen squatting in the shade of the trees looked very old and benign and it was difficult to imagine that they were some of the toughest warriors in the world.

Their spokesman one Khan Abdul Latif Khan who spoke in Pushtu translated by Caroe put forward at some length and with occasional supporting interjections from his fellow leaders, the various demands. Several of these were of a local character but on the wider front he pleaded that in the event of the British



Government vacating India the Khyber should be returned to them. Moreo'r li' mad' it clear that while they belong'd to no particular party their sympathies were with their Moslem brethren. Indeed he indulged in a considerable anti-Nehru and anti-Hindu diatribe. Nehru ho'st' actually stoned when he visited th' Frontier last year. I'd warned Mountbatten to expect a hand-picked *Ji'ga* but I must say th't this one seem'd to be genuinely representative.

Mountbatten's reply dealt with all the specific points raised, advising that it was up to them to negotiate the agreements with the successor authority. He did'd a characteristic personal point.

As I expect you know, I said I am a sailor and had the honour of fighting in a battle in the North Sea in company with H.M.S. *Afridi* called after your tribe because of its many like qualities. Although we had to fight you *Afridis* in the past on occasions with respect and like each other. Your *Ji'ga* has a reputation for good foresight. For this last session you have behaved and stuck to your agreement. In this critical time when power is to be handed over do not lose that reputation.

As tokens of good will Kh. Abd'l Latif Khan then presented the Viceroy with a number of gifts including a brass Pathan dagger and a chappal and a rifle of splendid craftsmanship made somewhere in the Khyber ca's. After a short break for coffee which only helped to heighten the hom from hom feeling we again set off in our single file of cars down the hill back to Peshawar.

On our return a second but smaller *Jirga* this time of Wazir and Mahsud tribesmen was waiting us in the grounds of Government House. They too were very outspoken in their attitude to a Hindu raj. Mountbatten assured them I have taken note of what you have said about Paktun and I have taken action about the release of prisoners from g'ol's. Arrangements are being made among themselves as to when they will come out. The sooner the present tensions can be released the better for all concerned. The efflowed sh'm'tiks with Hindu and Sikh minority delegates which not unnaturally spoke with much more moderation.

Immediately after lunch we left by air for Rawalpindi arriving there an hour later. We had hardly touched down and set foot in the Common House before the Governor Sr. Ev'n Jenkins whisk'd us off to Kabula' scene of some recent ceremonial rioting. Duty and the parched throats after a t'ntly 50 m! car'd we arrived to find th't the havoc of the small town was very great. Picking our way through the rubble we could see that the damage was as thorough as any produced by firebomb raids in the war. This particular communal rivalry in old the destruction of Sikhs and the rivalry hood by Moslems.

who were proving difficult to track down. The Moslems in the area seemed to be quite pleased with themselves and to be unable to appreciate that the local Sikh traders were one of the principal sources of their own prosperity. Economically the ruin which the two communities inflict upon each other is complete and horrifying both in its immediate and long term implications.

After a thorough tour—and on such occasions no detail escapes their eagle eyes—the Mountbattens sat at a small table and listened to various local leaders and representatives explaining the situation and putting forward their grievances. One Dewan Pinki Das Sabharwal regaled us with a highly coloured address some five pages in length which was not on the agenda. Jenkins was not unnaturally annoyed as the remarks were full of gross accusations against himself as Governor and gave various strange statistics including a reference to three thousand one hundred and ninety nine forcible conversions.

On our return to Rawalpindi I met some Indian and British Press friends at the local hotel and went into some of the difficulties they are having in filing stories from here. I got back only just in time for the dinner at Command House where I sat next to Colonel Still, an intelligent man who engaged me in an interesting talk on Parliamentary democracy and the need for the cunning good man to run it. He gave a definition of barbarism as an absence of values to which appeal can be made. Propaganda was thus to be seen as a concession to if not an actual by-product of barbarism.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Wednesday 30th April 1947*

Our party split up—Mountbatten returning direct to Delhi and Lady Mountbatten carrying on with her tour of the riot areas. I found myself busily engaged with correspondents who were anxious to receive background guidance on the result of the visit. It was necessary to tread warily. The full force of Congress and Moslem League interest was temporarily focused on the Province and the air was full of speculation.

My first job was to deal firmly with Altaf Hussain the Editor of *Dawn* who published a shockingly inaccurate story from his Peshawar correspondent under the following banner headlines:

Mountbatten Confers with Frontier Leaders—Manki and Quryyum Refuse to be Released on Parole—Huge Demonstration by Pathan Men and Women—Viceroy Flying to Jamrud. In so far as Mountbatten had spent over two hours with Manki and Quryyum who had both been the chief spokesmen of the Moslem delegation his first reaction was to make a personal protest to Jinnah but I dissuaded him from doing this on Hussain's assurance that the story would be corrected to-morrow. This particular correspondent's imaginative powers reach their

the reference to the Viceroy's flight to Jamrud & here there is no a field

Clearly there were no tangible results to report but in bringing the local Moslem leaders into touch with Jinnah and thereby the wider context of the Mountbatten certainly helped to take the edge off the immediate crisis. The only chance of calling off the civil disobedience campaign rests with Jinnah himself. The Frontier leaders remain idle who if left to their own devices have neither the will nor resource to achieve a reasonable settlement. The whole vista has brought home to us the need for achieving the wider greatness of India's future as quickly as possible. If we do not there will be a complete disintegration of what remains of law and order both in the Frontier and the Punjab not to speak of the other northern Provinces. It is certainly a great disappointment that this third central India should be remaining so calm.

Doon Campbell of Reiter telephoned tonight to tell me that a very strongly worded statement just put out by Jinnah and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar said Jinnah had said was in effect lunching his irredentist campaign against a truncated or mutilated British-ruled India and demanding a nation for himself of more ambitious dimensions. In fact of all Provinces included: Groups B and C of the Cabinet Mission Plan regardless of their communal majority. (i.e. Sindh the Punjab North-east Frontier Province Baluchistan Bengal and Assam). Prasad's statement seems draws attention to the historic Moslem League resolution at Lahore in 1940 which launched the concept of Pakistan but which spoke of a compromise area where Muslims were numerically in the majority. In the third session of the Constituent Assembly which opened earlier this week Prasad spoke as a guest. He said he had already prepared the mind of members for the partition of India as a part of the process for the division of some of the Provinces as well.

Prasad is one of the most influential of the Congress high command and has been holding the key Ministry of Food and Agriculture in the Interim Government. When I had tea with him at his home the other day I was impressed by his serenity and undoubted depth of mind and strength of character. He is essentially moderate and conciliatory a man of the people whose good reputation has little to do with the demagogic arts but is the outcome of long and loyal service to the Nationalist cause. He will undoubtedly have a key role to play in the new regime whether in the United or divided India.

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He was in fact to become the first President of the Indian Republic following the adoption of the Indian Constitution in January 1950.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Thursday 1st May 1947*

I was present at the lunch party to day and sat next to Mr Bardoloi Prime Minister of Assam quiet spoken and unassuming as are so many of the front rank Congressmen

At to-day's Staff Meeting we had a further discussion on the problem of the retention of India within the Commonwealth. We have received a reminder from London that in any consideration of the granting of Dominion Status the Indian States are not at present British territory at all and could hardly be incorporated as part of the British Commonwealth.

As far as British India was concerned Mountbatten came down heavily against the concept of allowing only a part to remain in with the consequent risk of Britain being involved in the support of one Indian sovereign State against another. He personally favoured the formula that only British India as a whole should be permitted to remain in the Commonwealth. In the meanwhile a completely non committal attitude on the question should be maintained. Ismay's personal view however was that it would be virtually impossible both on moral and material grounds to eject from the Commonwealth any part of India that asks to remain in. If Pakistan were involved relations with the entire Moslem bloc extending from the Middle East had to be considered. British backing if not of the whole then of a part of India might be the one way to avoid a civil war. Ian Scott subscribed to Ismay's argument.

George Abell while agreeing that the British would have a continuing moral responsibility felt that the worst way of fulfilling this might be the unilateral support of Pakistan. I said that I agreed with George and felt that support by Great Britain of one part of India only would result in the sub-continent becoming the centre of international tension and intrigue. McEville raised the important question whether under the Statute of Westminster all members of the British Commonwealth would have to be consulted about the inclusion or ejection of the whole or parts of India. He added that V P Menon Reforms Commissioner and as such an *ex officio* member of his Staff had advised him that Patel might be ready to accept an offer of Dominion Status for the time being.

We are turning our attention to the Bengal situation and Sir Frederick Burrows who was unable to be present for the Governors Conference owing to illness arrived yesterday for a twenty four hour visit. Mountbatten has enjoyed meeting him again and found him congenial company. Burrows made his reputation as a member of the Soulbury Commission which duly recommended Dominion Status for Ceylon and was taking evidence in Colombo a few months after Mountbatten had

lished his S.E.A.C. Headquarters in Kandy. He certainly provides an interesting contrast to most of his predecessors at Government House, Calcutta. For his very proud of his years of service as a railwayman and on one occasion said to have startled Calcutta society by declaring that the main difference between himself and previous Governors of Bengal was that while they were accustomed to hunting and shooting he was accustomed to shunting and shunting. He delighted in exchanging military memoranda with Mountbatten strictly as between sergeant major and Admiral.

#### VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI Friday 2nd May 1947

I have put out the announcement that the Mountbattens will be leaving for a short visit to Simla. Mountbatten wishes to make it clear that no interruption of business involved and the statement explains that he has now come to the end of his primary mission which represents Indian leaders and will be leaving after the weekly Cabinet meeting on the 6th returning in time to proceed over the next week.

I have also released an account of Lady Mountbatten's adventurous three day trip during which she started early one the sad few hundred miles by plane besides considerable stances by car and on foot. She left Lahore this morning in the Viceys Dakota returning over Multan the last place on her long itinerary just before 8.30. She was able to find there was a difficult time of about twenty miles road side difficulty as very poor. The plane circled left and right at any height down to but the hundred feet but failed to sight the airfield. Muriel Watson had the utmost difficulty in inducing her to call off the search and she finally agreed to do so. Her husband sent a message to the Mountbatten Commission expressing her regrets and her resolution to return to the best possible day.

I set off to-night by the Delhi Mail for a quiet long weekend with my family in Malabar to the first of the major ceremonial party in Simla on Tuesday.

In fact it was on the advice of Lord Mountbatten after he had called a meeting with The Right Honourable the Governor and Commander in Chief Ceylon in May 1944 that a Commission was sent out.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CRISIS AT SIMLA

'THE RETREAT' MASHOBRA SIMLA *Monday 5th May 1947*  
FOR THE PAST forty eight hours I have been able to relax and from our mountain aerie drink in the splendour and solitude of the Himalayan landscape. For days on end mists and cloud act like a vast backcloth allowing one a vista of no more than the valley below and the neighbouring peak of Shali a mere twelve thousand feet high and snowless in the spring. Then suddenly the curtain rises and stretching before one in an uninterrupted arc of over ninety degrees is the eternal snowline range after range sixteen thousand feet and more. No doubt there are many other vistas of the main Himalayan range as impressive as this for the roof of the world covers over two hundred and fifty thousand square miles and includes at least forty peaks of over twenty four thousand feet. But the splendid and awesome vision from Simla serves as a symbol of this immensity.

During my brief respite here in Mashobra the pace of political events in Delhi quickened. Ismay and George Abell left for London on the 2nd May taking with them the draft Plan for the British Government's consideration.

On Saturday there was the first major Indian Press attack upon Mountbatten significantly enough from the *Hindustan Times* to which some weight has always to be given in so far as it is edited by the Mahatma's son Devadas Gandhi and owned by his wealthiest supporter G. D. Birla. At any given time it is the mouthpiece of Nehru or Patel or of the Mahatma himself.

The article began by saying: For the first time since Lord Mountbatten assumed the Viceroyalty the feeling that he may not be playing fair has come among Congressmen and Sikh leaders. There then followed revelations of the Viceroy's main conclusions which were sufficiently accurate as to indicate inside knowledge and some no less well informed but somewhat threatening Congress reactions. These included a demand for special terms for the Sikhs in the Punjab. There was also an ominous unwillingness to concede a fresh election on the Frontier. The Congress Working Committee according to the writer has made the Frontier question a test case. It has made clear to the Viceroy that any proposal to dismiss the Frontier M. and hold fresh elections will make the Congress change attitude towards the British Government.

I understand that yesterday Mountbatten had two important reviews with Gandhi and Jinnah the net effect of which made Mountbatten wonder whether Ismaiyas departure had not been premature. By the lack of chance the interview overlapped, and Mountbatten had the political insight and social finesse to bring the two leaders together for their first meeting in three years. At once the formalities of greeting were over the encounter between Mountbatten and the two leaders. Gandhi and Jinnah with their chairs far apart were quite unable to raise their voices significantly so that they seemed to be like two old competitors engaged in long-distance dumb-ho. Although Mountbatten strained his ears in the hope of the conversation escaped him. His primary purpose was simply to see if they agreed to have a full discussion with each other at Jinnah's house.

After leaving for Simla Mountbatten has been gathering in the views of the Governors of the Punjab, Bengal and North-West Frontier Provinces on the desirability of other parts of India for the Partition. Briefly Cripps and our friends in the North-West Frontier Province, Birmah and a committee for Bengal, although on balance against and Jinnah took a extremely gloomy view of the situation and Jinnah took a extremely gloomy view of the situation and Jinnah took a extremely gloomy view of the situation. The only way the Sikhs could improve their position was through negotiation.

#### 'THE RETREAT' MASHOERA SIKLA, Tuesday 6th May 1947

Jinnah and Gandhi met for three hours at Jinnah's home in Ahrangzeb Road. An agreed statement was issued which read as follows:—

We discussed two matters. One was the question of dividing India into Pakistan and Hindustan and Mr. Gandhi does not accept the principle of division. If I think that division is not desirable where is my opinion not only in Pakistan but in the only practical solution of India's political problem.

The second matter which we discussed was the letter which we both have signed jointly appealing to the people to maintain peace. We have both come to the conclusion that we must do our best in respect of spite to see that that proposal is carried out and we will make every effort for this purpose.

Although the meeting in itself was clearly born in the light of the official advantage—a smoothly worded text suggests—undoubtedly lies with Jinnah. The emotional has been driven into the coffin of the Cabinet Mission Plan. The evolved question is just how far Gandhi can or will resist the tidal flow of events towards partition.

THE RETREAT MASHOBRA SIMLA *Wednesday 7th May 1947*

My brief respite came to an end to-day when I was summoned to Viceregal Lodge Mountbatten has brought up with him V P Menon who was closely involved in all the 1945 Simla and the 1946 Cabinet Mission Plan negotiations. Although he has suffered a period of eclipse he is still the trusted confidant of Vallabhbhai Patel.

On arrival I was plunged into two successive Staff Meetings the first without Mountbatten and the second with him. At both we considered fully the desirability of an alternative plan based on the assumption which V P held was more than possible that Jinnah would not accept the Plan in the draft announcement. Mountbatten said he had always borne in mind the possibility of rejection by Jinnah and in all the interviews he had had both with him and Liaquat he had watched carefully for any sign pointing to such an intention but none had been given. Every test he had applied led him to the belief that they intended to accept and he could see only two possible suppositions for Jinnah not doing so—the first it his real aim was to keep the British in India and by prolonging the bargaining to make it more difficult for the British to leave in the hope of obtaining thereby a more favourable award the second if he had reached the conclusion that Pakistan was not practicable.

But he seriously doubted whether either of these considerations was in Jinnah's mind. None the less he agreed with V P's thesis on the advisability of having available a clear alternative in his dealings with Jinnah. The second line plan would involve demission of power under the present constitution. It would not in the last resort require the agreement of the Indian leaders. Provincial subjects would be demitted to existing Provincial Governments and Central subjects to the existing Central Government but it would put the Moslems under the Hindu majority.

A telegram has been drafted for dispatch to London giving them the background and asking for approval to hold such a plan in reserve. We also went further into the possibilities of retaining India in the Commonwealth and V P confirmed both Patels and Nehru's positive approach to the subject and the need for dropping the terms King Emperor and Empire to which so many Indians objected. V P was finally asked to prepare a paper setting out clearly the procedure whereby a form of Dominion Status could be granted to India under the alternative Plans of Partition and Demission.

THE RETREAT MASHOBRA SIMLA, *Thursday 8th May 1947*

At to day's meeting a problem of some moment affecting our relations with the Indian and world Press was on our agenda. Ever since our arrival the Foreign correspondents have been seeking an off the record interview either with M



with Ismay on his behalf. The political negotiations have been so intense that it has been necessary to protect Mountbatten from any commitments other than those directly concerned with the formulation of the Plan itself and now Ismay is away for at least another fortnight. On top of this the *Hindustan Times* article last week only confirms that the leading Delhi editors and their correspondents know far more than would be available to them through normal channels. The clamour for some sort of access to the Viceroy for background guidance is more insistent than ever.

My feeling is that while an intervention with Mountbatten himself remains out of the question at this time and would involve discrimination against the Indian President would be wise and equitable if McEville were to stand in for Ismay. I am convinced that the effect of such contact will be to dampen down speculation particularly in the editorial offices of London and New York, during the critical ten-day hiatus between us and Mountbatten's proposed presentation of the Plan to the Leaders. Whether it will 'yes or nay' to the Foreign correspondent request it will in the case of a calculated risk. No decision was taken to-day. Most of the staff would I think like Mountbatten to say 'no' out of hand but while he is rightly adamant that he personally should not take any part in shares my view that McEville should fill the breach.

#### 'THE RETREAT' MASHOPRA, SIMLA Friday 9th May 1947

The Dominion Status question was discussed at great length this morning. Mountbatten began by saying he thought it most desirable that if Dominion Status was to be granted to India before June 1948 the grant should in fact take place during 1947. He went on far to say that he would like to see Dominion Status by 31st December 1947—giving as his reason the startlingly apt precedent of a plenary session of the Quebec Conference during the war. The meeting had been asked to approve a decision that war with Japan must be decided by 1948. To this President Roosevelt had said he would never agree. It plans into view. Well make it 31st December 1947.—President Roosevelt. Agreed.

Nehtu and British Men have arrived and much will depend on Mountbatten's powers of persuasion with them of the Dominion Status concept. It comes to light already. Frishta indicates resistance to any splitting of the Army. Finally Dominion Status is accepted. McEville was told that there would be more aid and gifts to India than the Commonwealth from India's remaining; but Mountbatten considered that the value to the United Kingdom both in terms of wealth, prestige and strategy would be enormous for India's whole the immense asset of

constitutional continuity. He appreciated the many administrative difficulties particularly those facing Pakistan but these were inherent in the situation anyhow. 'What are we doing?' he asked. Administratively it is the difference between putting up a permanent building a nissen hut or a tent. As far as Pakistan is concerned we are putting up a tent. We can do no more.

He told us that in the rush of business yesterday he had missed his thirty fourth anniversary of joining the Navy as a twelve years-old cadet.

This afternoon there was a brief respite from the intensive discussions. The Mountbattens brought Nehru out to tea at The Retreat. But for the mountains surrounding us it might have been a typical English garden tea party. To begin with there was a certain tension which stifled small talk. Fay sitting next to Nehru managed to elicit from him his views on the sugar shortage (they had actually brought their own sugar with them) and his antipathy to Simla. This characteristically was derived from his aversion to the spectacle of the rickshaw coolies whose labours he thought were an affront to human dignity.

Mountbatten asked Nehru if his responsibilities as Minister for External Affairs covered communications with Burma and if so what had become of the great road and airfield projects which had been built during his SEAC days at immense cost. There had been clamour for years for a land link with Burma—were these being kept up? Nehru showed some interest but felt that the cost of maintenance would be very heavy.

After tea Nehru said he would like to see our children. Mountbatten introduced our son Keith as his godchild exclaiming 'He stands up so straight he will fall over backwards!' We then went on a grand tour of the house and Viceregal orchards.

The Mountbattens fell in love with the place and are quite determined to come back again. During our walk up and down the orchard terraces Nehru was very agile and confessed to a liking for hill-climbing. He gave us a demonstration of a new technique by walking uphill backwards. This he said made breathing easier at high altitudes and rested the calf muscles.

#### **'THE RETREAT' MASHOBRA SIMLA Saturday 10th May 1947**

At our Staff Meeting to day Mountbatten reported on a breakfast conversation he had had with Krishna while V P spoke of contact he had made with Patel. The impression grows that the Dominion Status formula increasingly appeals to both the Congress leaders. Krishna Menon takes credit as the first to have suggested an early transfer of power to India on this basis. He thinks Nehru is attracted to the concept if only because it may give Mountbatten opportunity to bring his influence to bear on the more recalcitrant Princes. V P suspects that likely in completing the Indian constitution may also encourage

to look for a *de facto* Dominion Status as an interim device to fill up the time. The main difficulty on the Congress side seems to be the fear of the left wing exploiting Dominion Status as a sell-out to Britain.

To-day I put out the momentous communique announcing that the Viceroy had invited the *five* Leaders to meet him at 10.30 a.m. and that I had States Representative in the afternoon, next Saturday 17th May, the purpose being to present to them the Plan which His Majesty's Government has now made for the transfer of power to Indian hands.

At six o'clock this evening, after a preliminary run through with Mountbatten, Mr. M. met the Foreign correspondents for the long-delayed background talk. His own hints. He brought out the important point clearly—the need for a quick political solution but a democratic one. He said that in a matter of such magnitude the issue of choice must fall upon the people themselves or the elected representatives. He said the Leaders were being brought step by step towards agreement. This was diplomacy by discussion and not by *de la force*.

I gather from Eric Bitter that he is staying with us until the talk has happened. He is doing excellent and particular provided enlightenment for the American Press.

**'THE ATTREAT' MASHOBRA, SIKILA Sunday 11th May 1947**

Mountbatten has had a short meeting. He rang me privately. Mashobra just before we were due to enter in a party of Press correspondents, most of whom had been at yesterday's talk with Mr. M. to tell me just this—that it would be necessary to postpone the meeting with the Leaders announced last night in our communiqué as due to take place on 17th May. Would I prepare a second communiqué. This is certainly the stiffest request in political Public Relations I have ever received and having done my best to conceal my anxiety and mental turmoil from our tea-party I arrived at Vice-regal Lodge at 6.30 in the evening to find dependence on it to say at all.

It seems that last night Mountbatten gave Nehru the chance of sending the draft Plan as revised and approved by London and that Nehru having refused it has vehemently turned it down. He is convinced that it involves a major departure in principle from the original draft prepared by Mountbatten and his staff which Ismay and George Abell took back with them to London at the beginning of the month.

Nehru was satisfied that both in the Cabinet Mission Plan which he was taking to the States is still not dead and in the Mountbatten draft his concept of India as a continuing entity had been preserved. In the London draft however the break-down seems to him to amount to little less than a new start at Balkanisation. He really wants to fully establish that

India and the Constituent Assembly are the successors to and P. Listan and the Moslem League the seceders from British India. Many of the detailed objections he raises are trivial and could in themselves be easily disposed of. He will have nothing to do for instance with the proposed procedure for Baluchistan. This is no doubt an over estimate but the changes have aroused in him all the old suspicions of London as the home of an alien Civil Service whose hearts are hard and understanding strictly limited when it comes to handling India to day.

The one immediate result of his attitude is to make it necessary for Mountbatten and his staff depleted by the absence of Ismay and Abell to push ahead at once with a second revised draft at the highest speed for transmission to Ismay who by the time Mountbatten's telegrams warning him of this *volte face* reach him will be a somewhat confused and frustrated Viceregal envoy.

Having scratched my head over the second communique I went up with Mieville to see Mountbatten in his study to discuss the publicity difficulties and dangers before us. His hair was somewhat dishevelled but he was still marvellously resilient. He told us that only a hunch on his part had saved him from disaster. Without that hunch Dickie Mountbatten he said would have been finished and could have packed his bag. We would have looked complete fools with the Government at home having led them up the garden to believe that Nehru would accept the Plan. He said that most of his staff with natural caution had been against his running over the Plan with Nehru but by following his hunch rather than their advice he had probably saved the day.

I stressed that it was out of the question for us to put out any postponement announcement without ensuring full clearance and consistency with London. After some urgent exchanges it was agreed that the announcement should read as follows. Owing to the imminence of the Parliamentary recess in London it has been found necessary to postpone H.E. the Viceroy's meeting with the Indian Leaders announced to begin on Saturday 17th May until Monday 2nd June.

The wording of this communique coming so closely upon our Press party and within twenty four hours of our firm announcement to the world of the earlier date has caused me more anxiety than any Press statement I have issued in the past or am likely to issue in the future. I have visions of the whole structure of confidence and good will we have so carefully built up falling to the ground and an unrivalled feast being provided for the hungry Press speculators.

The weakness of our position is that at a moment of we have told the truth but it is not the whole truth and but the truth. No one in Delhi is likely to believe

was the source of the postponement and if they do that in itself will only help to make old suspicions more obvious. Every one knows that Nehru has been staying with the Viceroy and from the strictly Public Relations point of view I believe it would have been preferable to base the postponement on the grounds of drafting details. However there was certainly no time to argue on the publicity refinements of the dilemma we are in. The essence of the matter is that we have put out with the utmost speed a firm decision no less firmly postponed and have secured London's approval for the Textual adornment involving delay are unacceptable.

**'THE RETREAT' MASHODRA, SIMLA Monday 12th May 1947**

Mountbatten who has now had a chance to sleep on yesterday's developments said that although he seems to have been able to tabulate his own integrity with the Indian Leaders undoubtedly a phibiaspersists against any document or proposal issuing from London. Clearly any re-drifts will have to be made by his own staff in India. He has decided that there is no doubt to take away any option for independence either for Bengal or for any other Province. He felt that it would always be possible to reconsider this decision if the way at any time a quiet form both parts of Provincial independence. Nehru has his own plans for our proposing an early demonstration of power to the Interim Government as a Dominion Status.

After the meeting Fry and I were guests at a small family lunch party which took place under a cedar tree in the garden. Krishna Menon who has stayed in to patch up some of the rents in the Plan caused by Nehru was there. Most of our discussion was taken up with the Indian Boy Scout movement in which Krishna is interested. Here again politics and intrigue seem to dominate the scene. After lunch Mountbatten held forth on the strategic problem of giving India either united or partitioned. It is interesting to note his revelation of his discussion prior to the Congress of 1946 whose helices have hitherto centred round purely political considerations.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE PLAN REDRAFTED

**VICTORY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI Thursday 15th May 1947**

MOUNTBATTEN HAS HAD court us but firm intimation to return to London for consultation. At first he reacted strongly against

the proposal saying that there was nothing for him to go home for but the alternative proposal from the Prime Minister that a member or members of the Cabinet should come out was even more unacceptable to him

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Thursday 22nd May 1947*

Nehru and Patel have asked Mountbatten to add Kripalani Congress President to the invitation list for the Leaders meeting. They feel that his presence would help them in carrying Congress as against purely ministerial opinion. Moreover they point out that Kripalani's status as President is the same as Jinnah's vis à vis the Moslem League. Mountbatten has decided to write and say that while he recognises Kripalani's importance he can not agree to having him at the meeting itself but would be ready to see him privately either just before or just after it. This is a typical teasing problem which is deceptively trivial at first sight but which can so easily develop into a major crisis. If Kripalani is not asked Congress nurse the sense of grievance that they have had to make yet one more capitulation to Jinnah. If he is asked Jinnah is duly offended.

V P has drafted very brief but cogent Heads of Agreement. There are eight in all. It is a bold effort to get round the difficulty of the Leaders refusing to take the full burden of unpopular decisions and hiding behind their inability to decide on behalf of their respective Party machines. The Heads of Agreement press for early Dominion Status as an interim arrangement based upon the Government of India Act of 1935 with modifications and envisaging one or two sovereign States. If one only power should be transferred to the existing central Government. The sixth Head asserts that the Governor General should be common to both the States. Finally it attempts to cover the problem of dividing the Armed Forces. It proposes that units should be allocated according to the territorial basis of recruitment and placed under the control of the respective Governments. It makes a special provision for the distribution of mixed units.

Mountbatten has failed in his efforts to get Jinnah and Liaquat to sign the document or even a letter agreeing to it. According to him they appeared absolutely to accept its general principles but were not willing to state their agreement in writing. V P said that Patel's and Nehru's main concern was that Jinnah should accept the Plan in such a way as to make it clear that it really was his last territorial demand and not just an interim arrangement. He felt it would satisfy Congress if Jinnah made it clear that he himself accepted the announcement and would use his good offices to put it into effect.

Mountbatten said that he had cautiously tested Jinnah's reaction to the threat of failing agreement of demitting power to the Interim Government on a Dominion Status basis. Jinnah had

apparently been very calm and he said simply that he could not stop such a step in any event. In some respects this may well turn out to be the most delicate and decisive moment for Mountbatten and Jinnah's diplomacy. Mountbatten felt that Jinnah's reaction was both abnormal and disturbing. He was certainly shrewd. The bill of exchange has gone up and come down again providing only the evidence that Jinnah has a very steady nerve. Mountbatten feels that Jinnah is well aware of his potency as a martyr butchered by the British on the Congress altar.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Sunday 18th May 1947*

The Mountbatten left Palam this morning at 8.30 for London. A large party was at the airport to see them off including Colville, the Governor General, temporary Chief Viceroy for the fourth time. Mountbatten is taking V.P. and Vernon back with him.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Tuesday 2nd May, 1947*

Jinnah has dropped a carefully timed and placed bombshell. He demands an eight-hour deadline. "Cordoba" to link West and East Pakistan. The technique of leasing it seems to have been copied from Stalin. Doon Campbell of Reuters told him the story was given to him that it was in answer to a questionnaire which he had lodged with Jinnah some days previously. None a more surprised than he to find himself with such a scoop on his hand. In a telegram to Erik Crum in London I reported Jinnah was not verbal but written out. As a Reuters released the story Jinnah's secretary specially rang for a correspondent drawing their attention to it. Correspondents formed privately that Jinnah offered this interview to see all of them. They considered he was determined to make the statement anyhow and merely used Reuters request as peg to hang it on. Reuters was of course a well-chosen trustee for Jinnah's part the maximum press on London at this critical stage in the Viceroy's deliberations with the Government for though the exclusion of this source is a warning sign for himself the greatest possible coverage in the British Press.

In spite of a lot of imprecise speculation to the contrary by the London correspondent of the Indian papers Mountbatten's report is proceeding smoothly. His presence in London has already done much to restore the confidence of the Cabinet and officials and encourage the process. He has already had valuable meetings with the Opposition leader with whom support the timing of the whole operation. He said it is possible the quick passage of the Independence Bill through Parliament would be frustrated. In the present delicate situation Mountbatten's personal authority and guidance were needed to secure their vital co-operation and to set the legitimate doubts at rest.

Mr Attlee who throughout has assumed full personal control of the Government's India policy and any action arising from it has successfully injected a sense of the utmost urgency into his colleagues. The strain falls particularly on the Lord Chancellor and India Offices. To meet Mountbatten's vital timing problem the Lord Chancellor promised to have the necessary Bill ready for presentation to the House by the first week in July which will involve surely the fastest drafting of a major Parliamentary Bill in our history. Indeed its scope is without parallel or precedent in the proceedings of any Parliamentary Government. There was of course considerable concern on the defence aspect of Partition but otherwise I may have been able to send us optimistic and encouraging news. Dominion Status as elaborated by Mountbatten and V. P. Menon had been warmly welcomed and only a few editorial amendments and clarifications were required.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Monday, 26th May 1947*

Jinnah's Corridor demand has produced delayed but none the less definite reaction. The flames of controversy are being fanned and this whole affair is characteristic of the mounting tension which will be relaxed only with a quick political decision. The reserves of good will which Mountbatten has so assiduously built up over the past two months are rapidly running out during his absence in London. I have advised Vernon —

Prasad and Deo (Congress Secretary) have made forceful statements—Prasad says Jinnah's demands will not merit a moment's scrutiny and Deo considers that they are increasing under the illusion that the British can still help him. The country, however, cannot be intimidated with such bullying tactics and the demand for a Corridor cannot be granted.

*Dawn* has of course hit back at Prasad and Deo with a provocative leader under the heading *Cranky All* the key passage of which runs as follows. 'The demand for a corridor is not a new one. Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah has many times in the past raised that point which is so vital in the context of Pakistan. If Pakistan is to be real solid and strong the creation of a corridor linking up its eastern and northern areas is an indispensable adjunct. Be that as it may we have no doubt however that if Muslims can win Pakistan—as indeed they have already won it—they can just as well build a corridor somewhere for the linking up of the two segments of Pakistan. Mr Deo knows that too well.'

On Saturday Nehru gave an interview to the United Press of America which contains his first public reference to the extra-territorial issue. Mr Jinnah's recent statement, he said, is 'completely unrealistic and indicates that he desires no



ny End The demand for corridor is fantastic and absurd We stand for union of India with the right to particular area to opt out We envisage no compulsion If there is no proper settlement on this basis without further discussions being advised then we shall proceed with making and implementing the constitution for the union of India

Nehru confirmed this attitude as being dictated by interest to Neville that he is falling back on the alternative Dominion Plan as envisaged by Jinnah rejection of the main proposals of the draft announcement He would like the Interim Government to be treated immediately by contentions as a Dominion Government Jinnah will never commit himself Nehru added that he accepts what he gets and is asking for more There would be no decided commitment

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI Sunday 1st July 1947

I write to my mother —

We are on the eve of great events here and I am open to my eyes to the latent possibilities of placing the publicity for Mountbatten's mission in a more prominent position than the transfer of power which is due to be made on Tuesday The atmosphere is very tense and if the verdict for Partition—a decision almost certainly will be—considerably communal it can be expected that any decision will be preferable to the present uncertainty It should be noted though that the internal and fratricidal and that the British are probably more popular with both Hindu and Moslem than at any time in living memory

The main effect of the Government's 20th February Announcement has been to bring the Congress High Command round to the acceptance of the partition of India as a viable Gandhi refuses to align himself with the opposition and is putting up a fierce rear guard action against it He feels that he will carry the opposition one of the big unponderables

Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel think that the Congressmen in the Interim Government accept Partition on the understanding that by conceding Pakistan to Jinnah they will be able to bring him and elements in the Congress closer to Nehru's position by this by cutting off the head we will get rid of the head In this they are being rather sanguine so Jinnah's appetite shows signs of growing with his seed and his late demand for an exclusive corridor to join West and East Pakistan is a good example of his sedentary tactics Agreement therefore is being approached from both sides with the only possible grace Part of it is undoubtedly a tragedy but a worse tragedy would be to try to impose a unity unacceptable to the great majority of the hundred million Moslems

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE GREAT ACCEPTANCE

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Monday 2nd June 1947*

THE GREAT MOMENT has arrived. The Leaders drive into the North Court in their large American cars. I was in the Viceroy's study which is now duly transformed its dark panels painted a pale green. It is quite a small study with an informal almost intimate atmosphere compared with the Council Chamber and even the adjoining reception rooms. The painting of Clive in the entrance hall looks down upon this apotheosis of the Raj. Jinnah was the last to come a few minutes late. Mountbatten did his best to promote some friendly small talk but it was clear that the atmosphere was electric. The problem of including Kripalani has been solved by conceding to Jinnah Rab Nishtar so the Big Five have become the Big Seven.

The conference lasted for just on two hours. Vernon reported that Mountbatten did most of the talking and was in masterly form giving a closely reasoned analysis of developments. His opening remarks were a challenge to them to rise to the level of the events they were creating. He said that during the past five years he had taken part in a number of momentous meetings at which the fate of the war had been decided but he could frankly remember no decisions reached likely to have such an important influence on world history as those which were to be taken at this meeting. He made it clear that he was not forcing the pace against their will. A terrific sense of urgency had been pressed upon him by everybody to whom he had spoken. They had wanted the present state of uncertainty to cease therefore the sooner power was transferred the better for all.

Having made his last formal attempt to resuscitate the Cabinet Mission Plan and Jinnah having for the first time formally rejected it. Mountbatten then turned to the dilemma presented by Partition. Congress he said did not agree to the principle of the partition of India but if this were unavoidable insisted on the partition of Provinces to avoid the coercion of Moslem or Hindu majority areas while on the other hand Jinnah resisted the partition of Provinces but demanded the division of India.

Mountbatten was at pains to stress the backing of the British Conservative Opposition. The Plan he said was not a Party issue in London. He spoke of his distress about the position of the Sikhs and disposed firmly and finally of the referendum whether Calcutta should become a Free Port.

With characteristic finesse he introduced the new Paragraph 20 of the Plan under its heading 'Immediate transfer of power and defend the resulting Dominion Status not from the imputation of British desire to retain a foothold beyond her time but from the possible charge of quitting on her obligations. Therefore he said it was abundantly clear that British assistance should not be withdrawn prematurely if it was still required.

John one of the earlier interview had startled Mountbatten by making a distinction between his agreement with and acceptance of a certain proposal. Mountbatten invoked this particular piece of pedantry to his own disadvantage.

After completion of the Plan had been heard round he said he felt it would be asking the Indian Leaders to go against their consciences if he requested the final agreement. He asked them to accept the Plan in a peaceful spirit. When Nehru asked for a further definition of the difference between agreement and acceptance Mountbatten at once replied that agreement would imply belief that the right principles were being employed but he had to violate the principles of both if he could not ask for complete agreement. What he asked for was acceptance denoting belief that the Plan was a sincere effort on the part of the country. Nehru then said that while there could never be complete approval of the Plan by Congress in balance they accepted the Nishtar road and these dualities by pointing out that acceptance of the Plan really implied agreement to make it work. Mountbatten cordially agreed and from that moment knew that the essential title was won.

John then embarked upon an elaborate explanation as to why he thought the powerful Qadeer Azam would not take any decision himself. If entered into the part of the proposal he said both he and his Working Committee would have to go before the masses the people prior to a final decision. Mountbatten observed that this was true when leaders had to make vital decisions without consulting their followers and trust to carrying them with them thereafter. A decision taken at the top and afterwards confirmed by the people would be in accordance with democratic procedure.

John then went a near to the brink of affirming a decision as could reasonably be expected from one who had put it so far by saying it so often. He emphasized that this would go to his maters the people with no intent of wrecking the Plan but with the sincere desire to persuade them to accept it. He could only give his personal assurance that he would do his best. He would try his own way of doing and his own people.

Mountbatten wanted the reactions of the Congress and Muslim League Working Committees and of the Sikh by midnight. Kripala and Bal Singh agreed to send a letter that evening. John felt unable to report the opinions of his Working Com-

mittee in writing but agreed to come and see the Viceroy and make a verbal report. This satisfied Mountbatten.

To crown his success he secured the agreement of Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh to follow him with broadcasts to the people over All India Radio to-morrow evening. Mountbatten said he would let them see his script in the morning. Patel, who had said very little, pointed out with a wry smile that the general rule was for the scripts of broadcast speeches to be submitted to the Honourable Member for Information (i.e. himself) before they were used. Jinnah, without a smile, retorted he would say in his broadcast what came from his heart.

Never was Mountbatten's genius for informal chairmanship and exposition more signally displayed. His natural talent for this procedure had been enhanced by three years of almost daily discussion as Supreme Commander. Vernon told me he had never seen him more alert, keeping the discussion within his chosen terms of reference. The atmosphere at the outset was undoubtedly tense, but his opening speech soon brought with it the sense of sweet reasonableness and genuine goodwill underlying his whole sponsorship of the Plan. Not even Mr Jinnah's formality and stiffness could resist Mountbatten's urgent will to succeed.

As planned beforehand, Mountbatten asked Jinnah to stay behind partly to counterbalance any Moslem League criticism that he was about to see Gandhi, who never comes in company with Congress leaders, in a separate interview, and partly to apply more personal persuasion and form a clearer judgement of the ultimate attitude he is likely to take. But Jinnah made no comment. All will now turn on his midnight visitation.

Then at 12.30 the Mahatma arrived. In one sense he has been present throughout the whole proceedings and uncertainty as to his ultimate reaction to the formal presentation of a Partition Plan undoubtedly had an inhibiting effect on the Congress leaders earlier in the morning. They were only too well aware of Gandhi's unpredictable response to the promptings of his inner voice. There have been widespread fears that he will at the bidding of his complex conscience go to extreme lengths to wreck the Plan in one final effort to prevent the vivisection of India. Mountbatten faced this interview with considerable trepidation. Imagine his amazement and relief when the Mahatma blindly indicated on the backs of various used envelopes and other scraps of paper that he was observing a day of silence.

When the interview was over Mountbatten picked up the various bits of paper which he thinks will be among his more historic relics. On them the Mahatma had written: "I am sorry I can't speak when I took the decision about the Monday silence. I did make two exceptions: i.e. about speaking to high functionaries on urgent matters or attending upon sick people. But know you don't want me to break my silence. Have I said

word against you during my speeches? If you admit that I have not your warning is so perfluou. There are one or two things I must talk about but not to-day. But if we meet each other again I shall speak.

Behind this quaint procedure lay a great act of political renunciation of self-effacement and of self-control. When I went in to have a few words with Mountbatten about the Press communiqué at the end of this momentous morning I too collected a trophy from the small round table—nothing other than a “dood!” by Mr. Jinnah extracted from his subconscious at the moment of his greatest political victory. I am no psychologist but I think I can detect the symbol of power and glory here.

At four o'clock we had a Staff Meeting and had a complete run through of the paper on “The Administrative Consequences of Partition.” This is masterly document of thirty foolscap pages largely prepared by John Christie and it will certainly not be possible for posterity to say that we found a political answer at the expense of an administrative one. It is the master plan which under the umbrella of Dominion Status should make possible essential continuity for the new regime.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI Tuesday 3rd June 1947

Mountbatten began the day with an early morning Staff Meeting which he told us of his dramatic midnight encounter with Jinnah. As Jinnah had calmly refused to give any answer to the Plan in writing I may add Mountbatten also secured a line of his which was easy to say. He began by retreating at great length the remarks he had made round the conference table in the morning and no amount of pressure from Mountbatten could make him agree to firm acceptance from the Muslim League Council when they met. All he would undertake was that he would do his best and ours to persuade them in a constitutional manner to accept and that his Working Committee would support him.

Mountbatten then reminded Jinnah that the Congress Party were terribly suspicious of the particular tactic which he always used whereby he waited until the Congress Party had made a firm decision but meanwhile and then left him with the right to make whatever decisions suited the Muslim League several days later. Mountbatten warned him that Nehru, Kripalani and Patel had made a absolute point that they would reject the Plan unless the Muslim League accepted it simultaneously with them. Jinnah and furthermore accepted it as a final settlement.

Nothing Mountbatten could say would move him. He once more took refuge behind the excuse that he was not constitutionally authorised to make decisions without the concurrence of the full Muslim League Council and pointed out that he could not

in any case call this Council Meeting for several days. Mountbatten then said: If that is your attitude then the leaders of the Congress Party and Sikhs will refuse final acceptance at the meeting in the morning, chaos will follow and you will lose your Pakistan probably for good. What must be must be was his only reaction as he shrugged his shoulders.

Mountbatten then said: Mr Jinnah! I do not intend to let you wreck all the work that has gone into this settlement. Since you will not accept for the Moslem League I will speak for them myself. I will take the risk of saying that I am satisfied with the assurances you have given me and if your Council fails to ratify the agreement you can place the blame on me. I have only one condition and that is that when I say at the meeting in the morning Mr Jinnah has given me assurances which I have accepted and which satisfy me, you will in no circumstances contradict that and that when I look towards you you will nod your head in acquiescence.

Jinnah's reply to the proposition itself was to nod his head without any verbal undertaking. Mountbatten's final question was: Did Jinnah consider that he (Mountbatten) would be justified in advising Attlee to go ahead and make his announcement to-morrow? To this he replied: Yes. On this last assurance Mountbatten and Ismay both felt that the maximum possible measure of acceptance had been wrung out of him prior to his meeting with the Moslem League Council in a week's time.

Shortly after Jinnah left Kripalani's letter arrived. It makes certain reservations of detail but constitutes a firm general acceptance of the Plan on behalf of the whole Congress Working Committee.

At their second meeting Mountbatten resumed by duly reporting on Jinnah's visit to him last night and his acceptance of Jinnah's assurances and proposed action. Jinnah confirmed this by the appropriate silence and nod of the head. He then referred to the three Parties' grave objections to different specific parts in the Plan and was grateful that these had been aired. But since he knew enough of the situation to realise that not one of the suggestions would be accepted by either of the other Parties he did not propose to raise them at this meeting. He accordingly asked all the Leaders to signify their consent to this course which they did, thus voluntarily but almost unwittingly disposing of every substantial point of controversy.

After Mountbatten had pronounced that the Plan seemed to represent as near to a hundred per cent agreement as it was possible to get, Jinnah, Kripalani and Baldev Singh all added that they considered that the Viceroy had correctly interpreted and recorded their views. Mountbatten said the Plan would now be announced officially and none of the Leaders raised any objection.

It looked therefore as though all would be plain sailing but when Mountbatten appealed for restraint on the part of subordinate leaders and the bulk of the party in order to open up the prospect of building a fine future Liaquat could not resist the temptation to suggest that restraint was needed not so much from subordinate as from super leaders for example Mr Gandhi at his Prayer Meetings. This touched off all the old bitterness of feeling.

Jinnah and Liaquat insisted that Gandhi was inciting the people to do as they liked and to look for other authorities than the Leaders at this conference. He Kripalan retorted that all Gandhi's actions were devoted to non-violence and that considered that Gandhi would abide by any decision taken. Mountbatten was obliged to bring the discussion to a halt by saying he thought the subject had been settled sufficiently. He accepted Mr Gandhi's special position on the one hand and on the other was sure the Congress Leaders would appreciate the point of what had been said.

Mountbatten then with a dramatic gesture lifting it above his head and banging it down on the table presented The Administrative Consequences of Partition to the startled Leader. The high-powered Sir Stafford who Mountbatten has had ready for this day contains thirty-four fully typed pages of foolcap and is already in six pieces of composition. This brilliant Leader with the hour right up against the hard executive reality of the political decision. As Mountbatten said afterward the severe shock that its appearance gave to every one present would have been amusing if the general atmosphere of administrative indifference were not so serious.

He again analysed the target the more the molehill was built up characteristically if unwillingly to mount in us opportunity. Mountbatten suggested that there might be preliminary consideration of the paper before it was submitted to a Cabinet meeting. Liaquat and Jinnah then raised elaborate objections to the Cabinet in the United Kingdom being the deciding authority. Several minutes had passed before it became clear that Jinnah had understood Mountbatten to be referring to the British and not the Indian Cabinet. Sir Stafford then intervened. He then complained that he had been misled. You mean the Viceroy's Executive Council. A spade should be called a spade. In his mind he said worked in constitutional terms.

Liaquat then asked whether the majority vote would decide this in the Interim Party Partition Committee which it was proposed the paper be set up. Mountbatten said no one of them would be on the basis of what was for. He relied on a new participant in the discussion now that the issue of Partition had been finally settled. Liaquat replied sharply that it was not

a matter of a new spirit there was difference of opinion on the critical issue of the division of the Armed Forces

The discussion surprisingly perhaps moved into calmer waters. It was quickly agreed that division should be made on the basis of citizenship which in its turn would be based on considerations of geography. Jinnah declared stoutly that it would be his intention in Pakistan to observe no communal differences and those who lived there regardless of creed would be fully fledged citizens.

At four o'clock the members of the States Negotiating Committee assembled in the Council chamber to be given in advance of the night's official announcements and speeches the background to the decisions reached by Mountbatten and the Leaders. It was a difficult meeting. Once again a photographic circus provided light relief and enabled Mountbatten to get off to a friendly and informal start.

Round the big oval table were seated the cream of the Princely counsellors. Their Highnesses of Bhopal, Patiala, Dungapur, Nawanagar and Bilaspur. Sir Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Hyderabad. Sir B. L. Mitter of Baroda. Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar of Mysore. Malik of Kashmir. Srinivasan of Gwalior. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer of Travancore. Sir V. T. Krishnamachari of Jaipur. Panikkar of Bikaner. Sir Sultan Ahmed and D. K. Sen representing the Chamber of Princes.

It is interesting to note how many of the finest Indian minds from British India are Prime Ministers of the States. Many of them are front rank lawyers which aids them in their approach to such constitutional conundrums as the lapse of Paramountcy. Their relationship to the Princes they serve is very much that of a barrister with a valuable brief.

After another very skilful and persuasive explanation of the origin and purpose of the Plan, Mountbatten was subjected to some acute cross-examination on its application to the Indian States. They were all particularly anxious to know whether it would be possible to arrange for Paramountcy to lapse before the actual transfer of power in British India—the assumption being of course that the States would then be in a better position to bargain with the successor governments.

Mountbatten did his best to inject a sense of reality into the meeting. The creation of two new States would inevitably mean two strong central governments which could not afford to delegate their powers instead of one weak one for the whole sub-continent which could. On the other hand he felt that the acceptance of Dominion Status by them both offered a measure of protection as well as compensation to those Princes who had stood so loyally by their alliances and friendship with Britain. Whatever they reached he advised them to cast their minds for



yeas and to consider what the situation in India and the world was likely to be by then.

I accompanied Mountbatten in the Viceroy's Rolls to All India Radio where official were leaning out of all the windows and cramming the balconies. A small crowd had also gathered round the entrance to the building. Fry, who was on a balcony, told me afterwards that a small group of *Sdhis* stood at the bright caps of holy orange began shouting slogans just as we were entering the building. No sooner had they started to demonstrate than they resorted to a sort of flagpole-car. The majesty of the operation made the assembled Indians other people's property. They were mixed with laughter. These *Sdhis* have come from various parts of the country and have pitched the tents on the banks of the Jmna there to protest against the betrayal of Hindu life and custom which they consider necessary for the Partition of India.

After brief contact with Mountbatten, the usual and deliberate decision in contrast to the quick free delivery of his private conversation. It was a well-balanced oration with utter hyperbole relying for its impact on nothing but a statement. The usual boldly the right of Mountbatten to strike his message was subdued and object to the moment of personal triumph.

We were faced with light and occurring throughout. A huge moving address which was compelling like its mind and expression. He was either sincere or policy but a true reflection of the sadness which accompanied all success—the frustration and victory. Perhaps he gets strength through the high he reached the height as a partisan campaigner he retires to the heights of the past. The attitude which characterizes him are always in the service. So that the limitation method was able to say: We are little men serving great causes but because the cause is something of the greatness of the cause.

The following is a summary of the experts in Moslem League dialectic assured me that his speech was a masterpiece. A number of them put it in the immediate past. This is the language that will be understood in the bazaars and in the peace. By object to stand. I could not detect the magic. It seemed to me that this occasion to be well below the level of events which he had done so much to create.

Nehru's last word had been: I, Hindu, I am here. With Pakenham's end. This he said as he slipped, so that some started to rise but at first that the Qadeem Azam had the wisdom to the words and pronounced Pakistan in the bag.

Baldev Singh spoke last and new of the unmitigated loss which Partition meant for the Sikhs and the intense bitterness it was likely to generate among his co-religionists. The words were

eloquent and courageous. He gave a clear call to India's Defence Forces to uphold their high standards of discipline particularly against the pressures of unpleasant internal security duties. In contrast to Jinnah he saw the Plan not as a compromise. I prefer to call it a settlement.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI Wednesday 4th June 1947

This morning to an audience of some three hundred representatives of the Indian and world's Press in the Legislative Assembly Mountbatten has given the most brilliant performance I have ever witnessed at a major Press conference. He began without note or loss of word expounding for some three-quarters of an hour a political Plan of the utmost complexity both in its detail and implication. It was a speech which must have cleared many lurking doubts among that audience of professional sceptics about the Plan's substance and purpose.

When a correspondent tried to draw him on the Moslem League's demand for a Corridor—and thus on a point never discussed in the Plan—he replied 'Which paragraph in the Plan are you referring to?' He was questioned about the Sikhs—their prospects and attitude—and he made it clear that the whole Sikh problem under the Plan had given him probably more concern than any other single issue. He was pressed in particular about the terms of reference of the Boundary Commission which is to work out the actual lines of demarcation in the Punjab and Bengal and the Moslem majority district of Sylhet in Assam. When a Sikh correspondent asked whether a property qualification would be a factor Mountbatten smilingly replied 'His Majesty's Government could hardly be expected to subscribe to a Partition on the basis of landed property—least of all the present Government.'

During the Conference he gave the first informal indication that 15th August would be the likely date for the actual transfer of power to the two new Dominions. Actually it was on this issue of Dominion Status that he was subjected to the most searching scrutiny of all and was involved in an encounter with Devadas Gandhi who has a most disarming manner and who by the persistence of his inquiries gave a possible clue I felt to his father's state of mind.

Mountbatten did not at first quite follow the drift of what Devadas was asking but it was in effect that the British should reject any offer on the part of any single individual State to become a Dominion and should insist on India as a whole reaching a decision on the question of membership of the Commonwealth. He said he felt there was a great potential for mischief in allowing the respective Constituent Assemblies the ultimate decision on this matter. Behind the inquiry was the suspicion that Dominion Status was something less dependent together with the new one that if Pakistan

to remain in and India to go out, Pakistan might become a base for British imperialism.

Mountbatten's last words on the subject were: 'From all the questions that have been asked there is one thing which I sincerely believe is not yet clear to the people. Somehow people seemed to have some doubts about this word Dominion Status. It is a subtle independence in every possible way with the sole exception that the Member States of the Commonwealth are linked together voluntarily. In fact they look for support, mutual trust and in due course affection.'

Whether or not Deeds was wholly satisfied with the answers to his particular points, the enthusiasm of the correspondents as a whole judging from the spontaneous applause when Vallabhbhai Patel had read the harrowing proceedings to a large assembly was remarkable for such a case-hardened body. I spoke to some of them afterwards. Andy Mellor of the *Daily Herald* described himself to me as stunned by the performance, saying that he had never heard anything like it and did not expect to do so again. Eric Britter called it a *tour de force* while Bob Stimson drew attention to its impact on the Americans who had been deeply impressed by the argument—which was for them a revelation—the Dominion Status provided the best constitutional means for the transfer of power and spelt genuine freedom for India and was not just a device for enabling the British to hold on.

Mountbatten on his return to Viceroy's House soon had indications that there was more underlying Deed's doubts than had appeared at the Conference and all was not well with the Mahatma who was preparing to make highly critical comments on the Plan at his Pay Meeting that evening. Indeed last night, just before the Leaders were due to broadcast, he had indicated that they were to go beyond criticism, and had encouraged me to single out Nehru for a double-edged comment. After referring to him as our King he added, 'We should not be impressed by everything the King does or does not do. If he has decided something good for us we should praise him. If he has more than that we shall say so.'

Mountbatten was evidently decided that the time had come to clear the air with Gandhi and to prevent his apparent misgivings taking firmer and more dangerous shape. So just before the Prayer Meeting he invited him to come round to Viceroy's House. Gandhi was clearly in a state of some distress following under the first impact of the Plan that his lifelong efforts for the unity of Hindus and Muslims had fallen about him. But Mountbatten, summing up all his powers of persuasion, urged him to consider the Assurance of a Mahatma. It was a Gandhi Plan in all essence, he had tried to incorporate Gandhi's major concepts of non-coercion, self-determination, the earliest possible

date of British departure and even his sympathetic views about Dominion Status

Once again Mountbatten carried the day just how decisively can be seen by what Gandhi said to night. The British Government is not responsible for Partition he told the Prayer Meeting. The Viceroy has no hand in it. In fact he is as opposed to division as Congress itself but if both of us—Hindus and Moslems—cannot agree on anything else then the Viceroy is left with no choice. The Viceroy had worked very hard and had tried his utmost to bring about a compromise. This Plan was the only basis on which agreements could be reached. The Viceroy did not want to leave the country in chaos hence all his efforts. Never surely had a Viceroy achieved such swift and decisive conquest over Gandhi's heart and mind.

I had a personal telegram of yesterday's date from Joyce reporting. A packed House of Commons listened with intense interest to Prime Minister's announcement this afternoon. Proposals and first reaction from India undoubtedly created profound gratification among all Parties. Sense of unity and recognition of tremendous issues and possibilities involved were comparable only with most historic moments during war. After referring to the splendid BBC reception and coverage he ended. This has been a great day for us all.

Mountbatten held a Staff Meeting at 7.30 this evening. Having broken the deadlock of a generation there is still to be no respite for him or indeed any of us.

Already I detect the first sign of a storm over the States. Bhopal has resigned his position as Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes and cannot be deflected from a course of personal isolation and independence which runs counter to all the current developments.

Nehru is not reacting favourably to the Paper on the Administrative Consequences of Partition and there will clearly now be much more acute difficulty in maintaining the structure and existence of the Interim Government.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Thursday 5th June 1947*

George Jones the *New York Times* correspondent who has been very ill and is due to leave India in the next few days came round to see me this morning to ask for my personal impressions of Mountbatten in about three hundred words as he wants his last feature to be in appreciation of the Viceroy. Mountbatten in three hundred words? It is not easy at close range. But I have dictated this note —

Perhaps the most abiding impression is his tremendous creative energy by which I mean not only the energy which is in himself but which he injects into all about him.

to remain in and India to go out, Pakistan might become a bane for British imperialism.

Mountbatten's words on this subject were. From all the questions that have been asked there is one thing which I sincerely believe is not yet clear to the people. Somehow people seemed to have some doubts about this word Dominion Status. It is absolute independence in every possible way with the sole exception that the Member States of the Commonwealth are linked together intimately. In fact they look for support, mutual trust and in due course affection.

Whether or not Deodas was wholly satisfied with this answer to his particular position the enthusiasm of the correspondents as a whole judging from the spontaneous applause when Vallabhbhai Patel who was in the chair called the proceedings to a close was remarkable from such a case-hardened body. I spoke to some of them afterwards. Andy Mellor of the *Daily Herald* described himself to me as stunned by the performance, saying that he had never heard anything like it and did not expect it. So too in Eric Britter called it a total defeat while B. B. Stumso drew attention to its impact on the Americans who had been deeply impressed by the argument—which was for them a revelation—that Dominion Status provided the best constitutional means of transfer of power and spelt genuine freedom for India, and was not just a device for enabling the British to hold on.

Mountbatten on his return to Viceroy's House soon had indications that there were more underlying Devda doubts than had appeared at the Conference and all was not well with the Mahatma who was preparing to make highly critical comment in the *Pioneer* at his Prayer Meeting the evening. Indeed last night just before the Leaders would go to broadcast he had indicated that they were talking about or beyond criticism, and had encouraged a friend to single out Nehru for a double-edged comment. After referring to him as our King he added 'I should like to be impressed by everything the King does or does not do. If he has decided something good for us we should praise him. If he has not then we shall say so.'

Mountbatten wisely decided that the time had come to clear the air with Gandhi and to present his apparent misgiving in firm and matter-of-fact language. So just before the Prayer Meeting he invited him to come round to Viceroy's House. Gandhi was clearly in a state of some distress feeling under the first impact of the *Pioneer* that his lifelong efforts for the unity of Hindu and Moslems had fallen about him. But Mountbatten, summoning all his powers of persuasion urged him to consider the Announcement not as a Mountbatten but as a Gandhi Plan. In all sincerity he had tried to incorporate Gandhi's major conception of non-coercion self-determination the earliest possible.

## ADMINISTRATIVE CONSEQUENCES

and largely unaware of their meaning Jinnah was at great pains to explain that both States would be independent and equal in every way while Nehru was equally insistent that India was carrying on in every way as before and that Pakistan was the outcome of permission to dissident Provinces to secede which must not be allowed to interrupt the work of the Government of India or the continuity of its foreign policy. In this atmosphere of recrimination Mountbatten made it clear that he would not accept the continued requests of both sides to act as arbitrator on all outstanding matters in dispute. They have agreed to try to find a mutually acceptable judge for this thankless task.

The Plan now forty eight hours old has undoubtedly led to a *detente* throughout the country as a whole but among the Leaders in Delhi it has induced no brotherly love. The situation here is still very tense and is such that the most trivial incident could touch off a major crisis.

## CHAPTER TEN

## ADMINISTRATIVE CONSEQUENCES

VICTORIA'S HOUSE NEW DELHI Sunday 8th June 1947

THE CORE OF Mountbatten's problem remains political and the most immediate danger is of the dissolution of the Interim Government caused by the resignation of one or other of its component parts. It was always a feeble instrument. Now that the principle of Partition is effectively accepted there is not even the pretence of inner loyalty and purpose to hold it together. Mountbatten realises only too clearly however that if one or other of the Parties were to resign from it before Partition is ratified by Act of Parliament in Westminster the prospects of the 3rd June Plan would be gravely imperilled and his own position hopelessly compromised.

To-day it seemed that this very peril was upon us for the Cabinet meeting was only saved by a desperate diversion on Mountbatten's part from breaking up in complete disorder. In an effort to narrow the controversy by limiting its duties he suggested a moratorium on all policy decisions and high grade appointments.

A formula was found for submitting these matters to Mountbatten direct to avoid contentious issues being decided by the inevitable Congress majority vote in the Cabinet. At this Nehru sought Mountbatten's aid for ceasing diplomatic

pointments which he asked him to agree re n e the concern of P e stan Liaquat at once objected saying th t he d d not f r inst nce sh t see an Ambassador appointed to Mo co Unfort nately just such an appo ntment was envisag d and the nom co v a non th r th r Nehru's sister Mrs P ndit

The en ng scen was babel vith everyone talking fur ously at nce Nehru asserted that rather than t lerate M slem Leag e interference in th Go ernment's affirs h ould ins t on a majority v te be ng taken d th t f th G vernment vas to be turned o r t the League th w ld immed tely es gn M unibatt n had finally t call each m mber of the Cab net i d d lly to rd r def g further d scuss on of the part cul r s us and d d ng. We re not going n with the next it m until the s w f mling f ces i f nt of me Th s h d the intended eff ct E eryone la ghed the ten on wa br len But the i cident h ows by h w th a thr d th s ces of the Plan hangs C t cal d ys and dec s ons l e sh d of us

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI M d y 9th June 1947

At o Staff Meeting to-day th re was a prolonged d cussion on the mpl cations f Dom n on St tus and in part cul r of Mountbatten ema ng n after the transfer of pow r t serve f r a lim t d period s joi t G v rn r-General of both Domi n n Th concept h s been e co raged on the one h d by Congress s w llingnes s to pr pose him witho t condit e ther in this capacity r s Governor-General of Ind alone and on the other by J nn h r ng th t h should definit ly lay on to see th l term pha e thro gh n the capacity of a un fying head of the two States.

M unibatten's first s umption was that J nnah al o had in mind a comm n Govern r-General but only when he wa in London d d it b com appar nt that J nnah wanted three Gover n s-General on of Ind o e f Pakatan and one Mountbatten H mself n n o rall posit n as Supreme Arbitrator for th d v on of a ll most of h ch of c u e are in India Th s wa n kly rul d ut by the Br tsh G vernment as impracticable Mo nth t n l o told him frankly that t would be quite impos ble for h mself to as m this supra nation l role but th s m t me h s be n pressing the ad ntages from P kstan po nt of v ew of a joint Govern r-General h p as the best guarantee f a far physical transf e He has frankly ad vided us, h ower that he s most as rse to staying sh uld the invitati e come from only o e s d... J nnah so far has bee careful to conceal hi final tent on If it is in fav ur of a joint Governor-General h p some spec l provi ion will be needed, however in the Ind pendence Act and a decision from h m within the next three weeks is not l

The All India Moslem League Council met to-day in the ball room on the first floor of the Imperial Hotel. Towards the end of its deliberations there was a sudden but apparently carefully planned eruption of *Ahaksars* who came in through the garden at the side of the hotel and startled peaceful residents during tea by rushing through the lounge brandishing *belchas* or sharpened spades. With these formidable weapons they wrought the maximum of havoc in the minimum of time and shouting 'Get Jinnah!' were half way up the staircase leading to the ballroom where Jinnah and the Council were still in session before Moslem League National Guards could grapple with them and turn them back. It took police with tear gas to bring the disturbance to an end.

Jinnah behaved with great composure. Sidney Smith of the *Daily Express* saw him afterwards and told me that Jinnah had no doubt but that the assault was an attempt on his life. The only previous attempt to assassinate him—in Bombay in 1943—was made by a *Ahaksar*.

The *Ahaksars* or Servants of the Dust are a group of militant Moslem fanatics with much the same storm trooper ideology as the far more formidable Rashtrya Swam Sevak Sangh offshoot of the Hindu Mahasabha. Led by Inayatullah Mashriqi they have been engaged on terrorist activities ever since their foundation in 1931. Their demand is for an undivided Pakistan stretching from Karachi to Calcutta and to them Jinnah is as much the betrayer of Moslem interests as Gandhi is in the eyes of Hindu extremists of Hinduism.

A party from Viceroy's House going along later in the evening for dinner found the place in the utmost disorder. The large grill room was a shambles. Its air-coolers were smashed and its furniture broken up. The forces of fanaticism and revolution are on the move and this incident confirms that the crust upholding order from the depths of chaos is dangerously thin. Under the present tense conditions all the leaders provide far too easy targets for far too many would be assassins.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI Tuesday 10th June 1947

The Moslem League Council has passed a resolution in phraseology designed to infuriate the Congress but in terms which mark the nearest approach Jinnah is likely to make to a substantial acceptance of the Plan. After expressing satisfaction at the abandonment of the Cabinet Mission Plan it qualifies its refusal to agree or give consent to the partition of Bengal and the Punjab by deciding that it had to consider the 3rd June Plan for the transfer of power as a whole and by giving full authority to Jinnah to accept the Plan's fundamental principles as a compromise.





I must stress the importance of Patel in the agreements so far reached. He has in a rough exterior and uncompromising manner. His achievements tend to remain below the surface but he was probably the first of the Congress High Command to realise that the 20th February statement implied Partition if a political settlement by June 1948 or before was to be achieved. Having absorbed that vital implication he has never wavered and has stood firm against the inner voices and neural indecisions that have sometimes afflicted his colleagues.

Patel's realism has also been a big factor in the acceptance of the Dominion Status formula for which Mountbatten has worked so hard. This is inevitably a delicate plant. Personally I wish we could evolve an even looser Commonwealth concept which did not so directly involve the King's Sovereignty but could take in a Republic. This needs close consideration because I believe the present symbolic ties of the British Commonwealth are not really applicable to a Congress controlled Indian Union and should be modified to include for the first time on equal terms peoples of different races.

We are in the heart of Sikh country here and the prevailing atmosphere is one of tension and foreboding. Since the beginning of June sentries have been on all round-the-clock guard at The Retreat for the protection of our families and Moslem servants. Undoubtedly both Nehru's and Jinnah's speeches on the 3rd June helped to calm Hindu and Moslem fears and to avert the immediate outbreak of a major communal conflict and taking the sub-continent as a whole the popular reaction has in fact been remarkably calm. Nevertheless Sikh unrest in the Punjab is growing hourly. The implications of the 3rd June are now all too clear to the Sikh people. They see that the Partition of India means substantially and irrevocably the partition of the Sikhs and they feel themselves to be sacrificed on the altars of Moslem ambition and Hindu opportunism.

Lying along the perimeter of Hindu and Moslem power the Sikhs number some six million—no more than twenty per cent of the total Punjab population—but they succeeded in achieving influence out of all proportion to their numbers by maintaining their own unity and holding in effective balance of power within a United Punjab. With Partition however they are trapped and no juggling of a Boundary Commission can prevent their bisection. They react accordingly and their leaders hopelessly outmanoeuvred in the political struggle begin to invoke more primitive remedies.

Sikhism which is based on a most complex religious and social structure does not encourage or at the present moment enjoy leadership of high quality. Baldev Singh, Defence Minister in Nehru's Government is as his speech on 3rd June shows a man of high character and wide vision, but he is not

in the old mess. Nor does Patil the leading Sikh Prince and Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes in succession. Bhopal has a decision influence. Power is passing to the wilder men such as M. T. T. Ra. Singh and some of the young INA officers. Raghoebar is the head of us in spite of all that has been already achieved the outlook is still stormy and unsettled.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Monday 3d June 1947*

During the past ten days Mountbatten and the staff have been engaged in intense negotiations round front which may be said to add up to general progress in the campaign to clinch acceptance of the Plan. The principal element has been the All India Congress Committee and its Committee of Partition. In spite of considerable fire and a heroic effort to achieve a Concord signed jointly by K. Palani and Jinnah the main political decision of the two sides is seen no longer to be obviously decided.

At the day's moment Ghandi came down in favour of acceptance and the latter part of the morning the more communally minded members of the Congress High Command could not take hope of the final decision in the short run.

A fortnight ago directly affected by the Plan the Refereed map of the North West Frontier Province has after much heart each of the members of the Government accepted by Congress. At first Dr. Khan Sahib thought it best to boycott it, but on Ghandi's advice the local Red Shirts movement is to put it pass over its acceptance principles into practice and peacefully sustain the case for retention. While the referendum is being held the latter's exchange of the Mountbatten and Curzon's widely released just before I left for Simla. Mountbatten has decided to entrust the decision to military regime and Lieutenant General Sir Hubert Lockhart G.O.C. in Charge South Command India knows the Frontier well so that the Congress place Government supervise the military decision. Nevertheless I think we can say that as far as politics at the time are concerned the peak of the Frontier crisis has already passed.

Over Bengal Jinnah's position is particularly difficult. The demand for partition of the Indian Government the centre for his own Muslim League as a continuing right heritage them in the Islamic Administration for the West Bengal Congress.

The Punjab Legislative Assembly has today formally voted for Partition following on a similar decision in Bengal three days ago where Subhas Chandra Bose's motion to achieve an autonomous United Province finally died away before the final vote of the Congress. The great Partition Scheme the wheel turns full circle and Congress which is an early trigger reaction had bitterly opposed Curzon's

partition of Bengal now forty years later sponsors the self same policy

The Leaders have taken a basic decision about their policy towards the States in agreeing to the establishment of a States Department in Delhi which will deal with all matters of common concern and with the formulation of their final relationship. In the meanwhile it was agreed that the new Department should take over everything short of Paramountcy from the existing Crown Representatives Political Department.

That Paramountcy after the transfer of power is a problem bristling with political and legal difficulties has been brought home to Mountbatten from various discussions which he has had during the past ten days with the Leaders with his old friend Sir Walter Monckton constitutional adviser to the Nizam and with Bhopal and his adviser Sir Zafarullah Khan\*. They have been stressing that what was good enough under the Cabinet Mission Plan is far from satisfactory under Partition which is essentially a communal solution substituting two strong central Governments for one weak one. So they were pressing the claims of Dominion Status for some of the States.

Mountbatten has also seen for himself the paralysis of Princely uncertainty during his visit to Kashmir from which he has only just returned to-day. Both Nehru and Gandhi have been very anxious that the Maharaja of Kashmir should make no declaration of independence. And Nehru himself descended from Kashmir. Brahmins has been pressing to visit the State himself to seek the release from prison of his friend Sheikh Abdullah now President of the States Congress. Last year when Nehru visited the State he was himself placed under arrest by the Kashmir Government. Gandhi's view was that he himself ought to prepare the way for Nehru. The Maharaja has made it very clear that he does not welcome a visit from either. Mountbatten succeeded in deferring both visits by saying he himself had a long standing invitation from the Maharaja and would like to see him first.

When he got there he found the Maharaja politically very elusive and the only conversations that took place were during their various car drives together. Mountbatten on these occasions urged him and his Prime Minister Pandit Kal not to make any declaration of independence but to find out in one way or another the will of the people of Kashmir as soon as possible and to announce their intention by 14th August to send representatives accordingly to one Constituent Assembly or the other. He told them that the newly created States Department was prepared to give an assurance that if Kashmir went to Pakistan this would not be regarded as an unfriendly act by the Government of India. He went on to stress the dangerous situation in which it

\* Subsequently the Foreign Minister of Pakistan

who would find itself if it lacked the support of one of the two Dominions by the date of the transfer of power. His intention was to go through advice privately to the Maharaja and then to repeat it in the presence of his Prime Minister with George Abell and the Resident Colonel Webb in attendance at a small meeting. Here minutes would be kept.

The Maharaja suggested that the meeting should take place on the last day of the visit which Mountbatten agreed, feeling that this would allow him the maximum chance to make up his mind but when the time came the Maharaja stated a meeting that he was bound with else and would be unable to attend the meeting. It seems that this was his usual illness when he wished to avoid difficult decisions.

Needless to say Mountbatten was very disappointed at this time of events.

To-day's Staff Meeting had no fewer than eleven items on its agenda including Recommendation of the Executive Council and Governor General Jinnah's letter on this subject with various observations and with expectations. All necessary intentions were in Congress and Mountbatten proceeded to make the following motion: That Congress in the Muslim League should in any case accept the views of the dominant majority and urge unity of the people in facing them.

Not only three weeks have passed since the Leaders received the memorandum on the Administrative Consequences of Partition and accepted the principle that procedure should be followed by appointing the necessary Principal Committee. Various work is being done in the past few days in the light of the decision on the part of the Government. He made to him that they have so far considered the proposed emblem of an emblem.

The all eight full-time members of the Steering Committee of the Indian National Congress met on the 13th June. Presided by the Congress and Muslim League representatives especially they were Mr. P. T. Chatterjee, Secretary and Mr. Hamid Ali Khan, Chief Adviser to the Military Intelligence Department. Both the Indian Civil Service members and officers and officials.

With the view of the representatives of the sub-committee which has been widely agreed should be of full value both to the Indian and Muslim League. It is pointed out that the administrative principle of Partition can be settled quickly and that the actual partition effected by the deadline of the 15th August. In the meanwhile they need to form a dynamic political support that has so far been forthcoming.

VICTORY'S HOUR IN NEW DELHI Tuesday 24th June 1947

In spite of Gandhi's vigorous and decisive intervention at the All India Congress Committee in favour of the 3rd June

Plan one can never be quite sure when this volcano of non-violence will erupt

I spoke to Devadas Gandhi on the telephone this morning asking when he was proposing to call the next meeting of the All India Editors Conference of which he is the Chairman. In the course of the conversation he drew my attention to a Reuters report from London describing the forthcoming Parliamentary procedure for the enactment of Indian Independence. This was nothing more than an account of the traditional ceremonial in both Houses covering the passage of all Bills into law the introductory paragraphs of which were worded as follows. The British Parliament in thirty minutes of solemn ceremony will next month give Dominion Status to nearly four hundred million people of Hindustan and Pakistan. The Bill creating the two new nations inscribed on vellum and parchment will be drawn from a magnificent wallet embellished with the Royal Arms in colours and gold thread and read to both the Houses of Parliament.

Devadas said the reference to the creation of two new nations had very much distressed his father whose view was that such a report emanating from Reuters must have Government authority behind it and that this two nation theory was wholly repugnant to the Congress outlook. In fact it had provoked the Mahatma into issuing a special message at his Prayer Meeting on Monday in which he had said. The papers to-day talk of a grand ceremonial to take place in London over the division of India into two nations which were only the other day one nation. What is there to gloat over in the tragedy? We have hugged the belief that though we part we do so as friends and brothers belonging to one family. Now if the newspaper report is correct the British will make of us two nations and that with a flourish of trumpets. Is that to be the parting shot? I hope not.

Devadas urged me to take the earliest opportunity to draw the Viceroy's attention to all this and expressed the hope that Mountbatten might see his way to make some private disavowal of it and further that I might be authorised to make a disclaimer that would be published. He added that his father felt so strongly about the matter that it could be taken for granted that he would raise it at his meeting with the Viceroy to-morrow. I spoke I hope with sufficient suramy for I was frankly amazed that such a great man could see fit to make so much of so inoffensive a story. I told him that I was sure much more was being read into it than it could possibly carry.

I have reported on the whole thing to Mountbatten whose reaction to this kind of psychological pressure is very healthy. It may perhaps be best summed up as the application of the guid

slogan of Ismay he told me the other day that the morning when I get plenty to myself. Patience and proportion.

The visit planned some time ahead and without regard to political development has in fact turned out to be very well timed. Montgomery has been able to form his own impression of the progress so far made over the partition of the Indian Army and to help decisively in solving the problem of the withdrawal of British forces from India. With regard to British troops a compromise agreement has been reached largely conditioned by the happening a suitable time for the withdrawal from India should be phased over a period of six months from the date of transfer of power. Mountbatten has had Monty's support in suggesting a suggestion on that they should during this time be used in any operational role. He proposes that it is not possible to hedge a political transfer of power with military reservations.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI Wednesday 25th June 1947

Mevill spoke to me in a very strong terms about the delay over any decision on the Governor-General's office and consider it to be part of the anything else ranked courtly on the part of John who continues to play the role of Delphic oracle and dealer in riddles.

John's Henry correspondents of the Sunday Times and the Daily Press, told me this morning that John's Secretary Murshid had given him for publication the story that Pakistan does not want the same Governor-General as Hindustan but that it will be impossible for Mountbatten to leave during the next few months there so much for him to do. Bob Simpson also came round to tell me that Murshid had said much the same to him, but with the decorative addition that Pakistan's Governor General must be of Royal blood.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI Friday 7th July 1947

Now that the Punjab and Bengal have decided in favour of their own partition and as a result half of each will be taking their share in the formation of a new and separate Constituent Assembly the final machinery for assembling Partition settlement is in motion. The Partition Committee which was limited to Congress and Muslim League members of the Interim Government is going away to a Provisional Council of wider authority which includes Jan Jans and can take final policy decisions.

The new Council met for the first time to-day with Mountbatten once again in the chair and once again retaining arbitral status. But this is now no need for him to do so as it accepted with surprising speed and unanimity Jinnah's proposal that Sir Cyril Radcliffe should be invited to serve as chairman of the Punjab and Bengal Boundary Commission with the casting vote on both.

Nehru on his side secured agreement for the Boundary Commission to work to very simple terms of reference which are to demarcate the boundaries of the new parts of either Province on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Moslems and non Moslems and in so doing to take account of other factors. This was a compromise which met the desire of both parties—the Moslem League hoping that wide terms of reference in Bengal would improve their chances of securing Calcutta and the Congress and Sikhs calling for the inclusion of property and other qualifications to give them a better chance in the Punjab.

The original intention was to put the vexed problem of boundary demarcation in the hands of the United Nations but Nehru objected on the grounds that this would involve cumbersome procedure and unacceptable delay. Radcliffe's colleagues will be four High Court Judges on each Commission two each nominated by Congress and two each by the Moslem League. It calls for no special prophetic gifts however to suggest that the onus of unpopular decision will almost certainly fall on Radcliffe himself. I am sure Mountbatten has been absolutely right not to involve his present or future functions in these Awards.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Saturday 29th June 1947*

At our Staff Meeting to-day Mountbatten's attention was drawn to a leading article in *Dawn* casting doubt upon the Viceroy's methods and impartiality in the handling of the Referendum under the 3rd June Plan to be conducted in Sylhet. The complaint is that he has not arranged for military supervision similar to that provided in the North West Frontier Province Referendum. Mountbatten was at first taken aback on this point of fact saying 'My God the fellow is right' and adding that in the general rush of business he had not fully appreciated that the Referendum was under his aegis in the same way as in the North West Frontier Province. The implications of the attack in *Dawn* were wholly misleading for no irregularity had occurred or was intended.

I was given the somewhat delicate task of explaining to Altaf Hussain that the matter was being suitably dealt with. Hussain whose gifts of self-expression are primarily in terms of invective had closed his leading article with the threat that 'If no satisfactory announcement is made within the next forty-eight hours we shall be compelled to return to the subject and indulge in some plain speaking'. This was my opportunity to do the same with him at once. I then took him in a more reasonable frame of mind to see George Abell and on the understanding that we would not be subjected to further threats and time limits we assured him that we would keep him posted with the steps the Viceroy proposed to take.



We parted good friends. It must be confessed however that Hussain is doing little more than reflect the current hue and cries of his Leader. Only to-day Mountbatten received a letter from Jinnah which provoked the strongest reaction I have ever heard of from the usually bland and urbane Ismay. It was bitter, he said, which I would not take from my kaig or send to a coolie.

VICTORY HOUSE, NEW DELHI, Monday 30th June 1947

The Partition Council is largely a result of Mountbatten's in-principle has most surprisingly agreed without delay or dispute to the proposed reformation of the Indian Armed Forces.

Great praise is due to A. H. L. K. and Ismay for providing the framework in which reconstruction—as A. H. L. K. has hitherto termed it—can take place. It is Mountbatten himself at the critical moment who did the good deed to inject into the discussion the right of Government of Orissa, who as Secretary of the Defence Department during the war, was the only Indian civil servant with any experience of high level defence organisation. He succeeded in quickly establishing the confidence of Nehru and Sardar Patel as well as enjoying the advantage of a long standing friendship with Liaquat Ali Khan. This is by intense personal intervention over the past week has succeeded in smoothing the way to concessions by both sides in the negotiations.

The basic principle adopted is that India and Pakistan shall each have their own separate Armed Forces predominantly non-Muslim and Muslim respectively, which a from 15th August are to be under their own separate control. Both sides have vehemently demanded complete military independence as a condition of settlement. Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan openly asserting that they are not prepared to take over the reins of Government should the Indian Armed Forces be merged.

Both sides too have demanded subject to any form of centralised administration control after the 15th August but both Mountbatten has once again arrived at a decision by insisting that the administration of the Armed Forces should continue under A. H. L. K. until the Partition is complete and physical and complete. He has decided to remain in India in administrative control of the Indian Armed Forces for the time being under a Joint Defence Council to consist besides himself of the combined Governor-General or separate Governors-General and the two Defence Ministers.

To avoid confusion with the two Commanders-in-Chief of both Dominions A. H. L. K. has been called Supreme Commander from 15th August until his task is completed. The target date is 1st April 1948 but in the meantime he is to have no responsibility for law and order or any operational control over any units now those in transit from Dominion to another.

It has never been possible to isolate the partition of the Indian Army from its wider political context. In all the circumstances of suspicion, ill will and communal clash it is doubtful whether human ingenuity could have avoided this tragic necessity or achieved a more workman like formula.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Tuesday 1st July 1947*

The tension in the Punjab grows as 15th August approaches. A straw in the wind is a letter which Auchinleck has received and forwarded from a Sikh refugee in Delhi. He complains that the Seventh Sikhs are still in the Basra area protecting the Persian oil zone but that during these twelve months tragic events have occurred in their home land which have upset the minds of our brave Sikh brothers abroad. When India is being divided our men should be home with their kinsfolk. I trust you will issue orders for their speedy return to their home before the August drama unfolds itself.

Jenkins reports that the situation in Lahore and Amritsar gives ground for grave concern. The violence takes the form of scattered but widespread arson and stabbing carried out by cloak and dagger techniques which are very difficult to suppress by normal police or military action. Having discovered how easy it is to burn down an Indian city, the incendiaries are particularly dangerous. Throwing fireballs through windows and skylights and making full use of roof tops and narrow city lanes they are almost impossible to catch in the act.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### TO STAY OR NOT TO STAY

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Wednesday 2nd July 1947*

CONGRESS AND MUSLIM League leaders have been sitting in separate rooms at Viceroy's House poring over the terms of the Draft Dominions Bill the title of which incidentally has been strengthened to that of Indian Independence Bill. Jinnah had been excusing himself from taking any formal view about the Governor Generalship until he had had a chance to scrutinise the Bill and delayed his decision for a few more hours under cover of a desire to consult with certain close colleagues who were engaged on the Referenda.

He has at long last come clear and Jinnah's verdict goes in favour of Jinnah. He still professes to nurse the illusion

It would be possible for Mountbatten to supervise a fair Partition by a man in a more strictly sphere capacity above the two Heads of State. Jinnah indicated that he had taken the decision against him all on the instance of his close friend but it would be interesting to know who the friend are and it would seem that his several leagues and all others have been advising him strongly to the contrary feeling he would have more power in his hands as Governor-General. They were only too well aware that in the division of a great India starts with the total advantage of having the overwhelming percentage of them in her physical possession and that accordingly an eight months spell with Mountbatten as Joint Governor-General must be of primary advantage to Pakistan.

When Mountbatten asked him frankly whether he realised what his decision would cost the State of his creation Jinnah candidly admitted that it would possibly cost several crores of rupees in assets but that he was unable to accept any position other than that of Governor-General of Pakistan on the 15th August. Nevertheless he added that he particularly hoped Mountbatten would at any time Governor-General of India as he felt that this would help relations between the two Dominions.

An emergency meeting of Mountbatten's staff was held at Imphal on 12/30th morning. The purpose was to consider various possible courses open to the Viceroy who was placed in a most difficult and delicate position. I may thought it advisable to state the effect of the fact of the situation and clarify the various points of procedure Mountbatten with object of advice before was exposed itself as it has been inevitably subject to reaction.

Jinnah has certainly maintained the element of suspense and surprise on this subject the last moment. We all assumed that he would be bound to give the assets and powers of the former Mountbatten to those of the constitution of the Governor-General and in the basis of the first assumption we went further and guessed that he would want to take advantage of Mountbatten as Governor-General. Firstest from our thoughts was what has in fact happened—Jinnah himself elected and Mountbatten invited from Congress line.

After a careful consideration in the general consensus of opinion was that in these circumstances Mountbatten should be strongly advised to accept the unconditional Congress offer to him and remain on Governor-General of the Dominion of India. The possible reactions of action reduced themselves to the following—

- (1) To agree to Jinnah becoming Governor-General of Pakistan, and for Mountbatten to stay on as Governor-General of India alone.

(2) To agree to Jinnah becoming Governor General of Pakistan and to ask Congress to nominate someone other than Mountbatten as Governor General of India

(3) To devise a formula whereby Mountbatten would be enabled to remain as Governor General of both Dominions while at the same time substantially satisfying Jinnah's wishes to control Pakistan

In the meanwhile I have sent a wire to London suggesting that the Editor of the *Evening Standard* be invited to send a representative out to India to study a few of the elementary facts of the situation here. This proposal has been prompted by an unusually reckless piece of Beaverbrookese. The proposition put before the *Evening Standard* readers in a leading article is: "If it was possible to set up two Dominions in India then plainly had the requisite statesmanship been available it would have been possible to convert India into a single Dominion owing an undivided allegiance to the Crown. There are also some ship happy references to Balkanisation and an utterly reactionary step and the whole of our efforts are denounced as political auction."

What a pity that Beaverbrook who genuinely believes in a liberal Empire in the Western and Southern Hemispheres does not seem to understand what men of goodwill who also seek a similar dispensation are trying to do here in the East.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI Thursday 3rd July 1947

We had our Staff Meeting with Mountbatten this afternoon and he asked for our views on the Governor-Generalship round the table one by one. All but one of us urged upon him that in the interests of India, Pakistan and Britain it was his clear duty to accept the Congress invitation. Our virtual unanimity and the obvious strength and sincerity of our collective opinion took him by surprise for previously before being confronted by the firm reality of Jinnah's decision we had taken the view informally and as individuals that it would be undesirable for Mountbatten to lose his objective and almost judicial status. But now it is clear to us that Jinnah by identifying the Pakistan Governor-Generalship with himself has created a wholly new situation.

When my turn came to speak I read out the note I had prepared. I was careful to confine myself to the publicity implications of the three courses considered. It has been a political commonplace. I wrote that with the transfer of power Pakistan would become the last outpost of British Imperialism and that the anti-British bias of Congress would quickly prevail. Congress invitations to His Excellency Colville and Nye knock that criticism on the head. From the view point of British prestige it is a tremendous thing that Congress at the moment of victory

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t w o l d b a l m i n g f c t r t H E s s i f l e s I t h t t l d  
b w d e l y r e l d t h i n e e l s e o u l d b b l to d o m o r e n d  
n v e r o f h c l o s o c c u r t h J a h a t t h c r i t i c a l t i m e  
o t h C o v n C e l l d b e l i k l y to b e n p o s i t i o n  
to d o s m u h T h g m e n t t h t l m b d n i n o l d  
f m V e r o y o f I l I n d t o G r G n r l o f I d l e s  
P k i n c a n t l s b m t b e t a n e d r h o l d t b e s t r o n g l y  
s t r e d c l m b d n f r m I l T h w h o l e e m p h s i s o f I l I  
m h e r e h b e e n t h e f t c o n t h b e g n n g o f a n e  
c h p t e r r r l i n w i t h I d a n d n o t n t h e l a s t  
V e r o y

I f H E t h n d t o c c e s s o r 1 5 t h A u g u s t h e  
w o l d o b s l y b l g t h e c r e s t o f t h e v a c u u m o n c e  
I l w a a p p e c i d t h a t H F h d b e n t d b y C o n g r e s s u n  
c o n d i t i o n l y a n d h d t m e d d w t h r n u t I b e l e e t h e r  
w o l d b e a c o n d r a b l I m e f r i c u m b t h m m e d t e n d  
l o n g t e r m t h t h a s l e a n g t h e j b h I f d o a n d m a k i g a  
I l k g e t a w a y

A m o n g t h e m c e l l n u s t e m w e c n d e r e d w h e t h e r a p a r t  
t i m e d I n d i a m e a t a l s o a p a r t i n d k e n n e l C l b T h w a s  
o n l y t e s t c a s e f o r t h M i t r y S e c r e t r y s o f f i c e i s b e n g n  
t r a d e d t h q u e s f r o m v A l l I n d i a b o d e s t w h t  
t h y s h o u l d d o n a t

VICTORY HOUSE NEW DELHI 1 5 t h J u l y 1 9 4 7

M o t h a t n h t o d a y d e r t d t h e c r i s i s o v e r t h e f u t u r e o f  
t h e I n t e r m G e r n m t b y c a l l i n g n I l t h m e m b e r s C o n g r e s s  
d M o s l e m l e g l i k e t o r e s g a n d t h e n m i t t h e m t o  
e x t r y o n u r t l t h e a c t u a l p a n g f t h I n d i a n I n d e p e n d e n c e B i l l  
a t W e s m a n s t e r B h a r d t h a c t w h h p l y s f i n t i m e a n d  
i n o t o f c u r s e a f n i s l i o n o f t h e p l e m l e s a c o m p l a n t d  
a d d a g r o u w r a n g l e B r f l y e s s i n c e t h a c c e p t a c e f t h

3rd June Plan Mountbatten has been subjected to two conflicting pressures. On the Congress side it is largely a repetition with greater insistence of Patel's complaint. You won't govern yourself at least let us govern. To this Jinnah's reaction is that if any Moslem League Ministers are removed they will resign en bloc making it clear that they are withdrawing from all co-operation and washing their hands of the whole Partition scheme. Mountbatten is well aware that any such action on their part would once again wreck the prospects of peace and of Pakistan.

Nehru tired and overwrought and subject to these increasing Congress demands to become master forthwith in his own house has been on the verge of resignation on this issue ever the past week. Jinnah first of all rejected outright any formula which involves the actual handing in of portfolios by the Moslem League members as being an insult to the League. When Mountbatten evolved a scheme and actually drafted a Press announcement to meet his susceptibilities under this heading Jinnah changed his ground saying that he would resist the scheme as illegal under the 1935 Act. This gave Mountbatten a unexpected opening for on inquiry in London he found that there is sufficient foundation in Jinnah's legal complaint to make it impossible for him to proceed with the constitution of the Government in advance of the passing of the Act.

At the Staff Meeting to day we argued out at great length the possibility and consequences of Mountbatten staying on beyond 15th August as Governor General of the Dominion of India only. We have not as yet succeeded in removing his grave misgivings. He fears the loss of objective status will be a crippling handicap to his usefulness and may well dissipate the good will he has won from Hindu and Moslem alike.

Mountbatten now wants to have authoritative advice from London from the King and Prime Minister downwards before reaching a final decision. He also suspects that the Government may feel—not unjustifiably—that he has misled them and put them in a false position by over selling the likelihood of a joint Governor Generalship.

So he has decided that I may should leave for London at once officially to be available to the Government while the Independence Bill passes through Parliament but in addition to secure confidential guidance at the highest level as to whether he should stay on or come home. I am to go as well and I will use the opportunity to make a parallel check on Press and other informed reactions to the new situation.

LONDON Monday 7th July 1947

We left Palam in the Viceregal York on Saturday afternoon touching down at Northolt by tea time today. My whole vision of Indo British travel has been freshened by my sequence

high speed and even higher priority flights over the past three years. I glided has never looked like it more than when we flew low over Beahm Head. The cliffs of Dover and Calais stood out so clearly and close together that from ten thousand feet they seemed to be part of the same mainland, the straits appearing as the narrow crevices of some mighty river or grand harbour. The green of English fields from the air had a soft celestial quality not to be found in the dark hues of land washed by monsoons.

I may was in splendid form on the flight. He had the Roman virtue of *equanimity*. He blended himself as a perfect foil to Mountbatten with his more intense and unchangeable moods. I may had taken great pains to be a very good and a very good at our various landing points—Kanchi, Bombay, Madras—we landed in good time, and he left us a comfortable hour in the morning. He said they were back to India with the Mountbattens in May had been an excellent holiday. He would never undergo again. I am sure to beat the clock all they had succeeded in. I was playing with the very best of them.

By the clock the government was in close conference with the Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street. The Prime Minister did not take long to reach the conclusion that the new difficulties that in any way lessened but they enhanced the need for Mountbatten to stay on in India.

LONDON Tuesday 21st July 1947

After dinner yesterday I may attended meeting at 10 Downing Street which lasted beyond midnight. Although there was some doubt expressed about Mountbatten's personal position arising from the change from a neutral to a partial status particularly in the event of a put between the two Dominions, the Minister were generally in favour of Mountbatten accepting the Indian offer. Attlee himself went so far as to say that Mountbatten could see this through and no one else could do so. The Government were deeply impressed by the Muslim League's support for the proposition which I may was bluntly conveyed to them in writing from Liaquat. The position in fact that both sides have now requested Mountbatten to remain on with one side.

This morning the Prime Minister called in the following Opposition leaders: Salisbury, Macmillan, Butler, Samuel and Clegg. I may put the problem before them. Lord Samuel was rather anxious to see the decision which he had originally expected the Mountbattens to make. I may was sitting over the two Governors-General but the general consensus of the meeting was that such a suggestion was now too late to put into practice and in any case likely to be unacceptable to the Congress. The Liberals were wholly committed in favour of Mountbatten.









more than a thousand miles by air a refreshing experience and after the hectic tempo of events in London we emerged fairly limp to take our part in the vital step of the political transfer.

In our brief conference—based on the reports we received from Mountbatten when we were in London the secret of the so far in its onset and immediate implications—has been officially disclosed with great tension still cut. Mountbatten has reconstituted the Interim Government so that it now amounts to eight of the two Provincial Administrations in the four and one for Pakistan each dealing with the business and consulting the only committee of common concern. The advantage of the plan was that it did not involve any resignation of the Muslim League members.

The order issued last Saturday morning four hours after the Royal Assent to the Indian Independence Act, took the Governor-General personally through the distribution of portfolios. Nehru and Patel, with great difficulty, accepted the new formula. As for Jinnah, when Mountbatten presented the proposal to him he said yet again that he would give them his careful attention. But this time Mountbatten was for once in position to tell him that his two devices were not equalled as he needed in his own right and possibly to his order bringing the new arrangements into force forthwith.

With characteristic ingenuity Mountbatten has prepared for his Staff and all the Ministers and officials concerned in the partition arrangements a small tear-off calendar giving the days of the month under the bold type 'X Days left to prepare for the Transfer of Power until D Day itself'. He has headed the Partition Council however his already taken the hunt for the thing smoothly and keeping pace to schedule.

Mountbatten now with the thick of the States problem. As with his diplomatic prior to the 3rd June Plan, he took the calculated risk and personally spent the 10th of the instrument of August in undertaking to get all the Powers into the partition bag while Viceroy led the project Congress. He embarked with the assurance of Pilsdean's support and a most statesmanlike performance in the new States Department the day we left London. The most stable problem however is Hyderabad which will undoubtedly call for special action. Mountbatten, by the way, is going to the heart of the matter and feels that the only chance of securing a reasonable settlement is to see theizam personally.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI This day 24th July 1947

I spent most of the day dealing with the first of the important Partition Council statement which since the grouping of a British Force in the Punjab Partition areas. This peculiar military command will cover twelve of the fourteen districts.



He used very upon in his a mouldy of persons making it clear at the outset that in the proposed Instrument of Accession the V P Men had devised they were being persuaded the political office from the Congress which was not likely to be repeated. Indeed it was not even firm office yet and the men chiefly being on the basis of his capacity to provide Patil the full basket of captives. He told them that after the 15th August he would no longer be a participant in their behaviour. Congress representatives would do the President's bidding hoping to build up their own stock of arms that the weapons they would be likely to get would be very basic. On particular made with perfect temper and emphasis did it fall to its mark with Thiruvananthapuram. If he did the Instrument of Accession signed had granted that Patil and the Congress would not interfere with the Government and the title from the King of Daman and Diu which he knew meant much to them. For the first time he had said in this context that he would be obliged to refrain from the habit of the President that Montague had been unable to pick up implicitly. Congress representatives as usual for the King of these had day after day the blood royal cases were with the Thiruvananthapuram of his Majesty's name. And then the general phrase. You cannot say from the Dominion Government which your government may then say you run away from the subject for his sake if you respond.

I cannot imagine how ever more difficult a matter for any man than it did seem to him then on Her Majesty's invitation audience for her day hepherds in the unenviable position of listening to the Congress and Mountbatten's remarks. He lent words not full of dignity. For his somewhat magnanimous fact that with his own point of view that a mad power of decisions. In the process what began as an occasion of high seriousness ended in one of flippancy and entered a Mountbatten's benevolence. In the mass of questions cogent and obtuse which were thrown at him.

Thurstan Mahraj absent from his State and from India at this critical moment did not seem to participate in the importance of the coming of himself to the meeting even if briefing him. Down from the Dewan had been sent no instruction what. Surely Mountbatten asked you must know your Rules and can take a decision on his behalf? I do not know my Rules and the hapless Dewan replied and

Lord Mountbatten himself invested the Maharaja of Jaisalmer and Bikaner with the Grand Cross of the Star of India (G.C.S.I.) after the transfer of power.







**Airfield Arrival 22nd March 1947** Lord Mountbatten Viceroy designate on arrival at Palam airfield is introduced by Mr (now Sir) George Abell to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Mr Liaquat Ali Khan and Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck



**Viceroy's Meeting 22nd March 1947** Lord Mountbatten & Lord Wavell greet each other at the top of the Viceroy's





M h m Gandhi t k hi M r i g M i c V i y H f  
he f t c m in hi L I 2 Ap il 1947

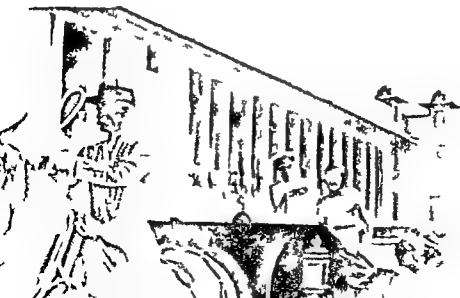


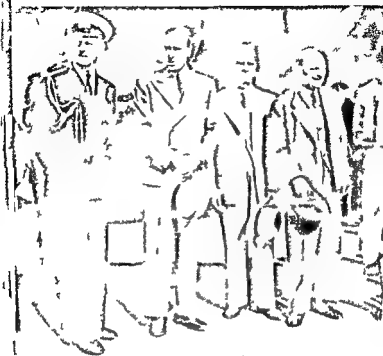
I t d c o t o j n h V e r y H 5th Ap il 1947



C R with Lord and Lady Mountbatten 8 March 1948

Departure in State New Delhi 21st June 1948 - Lord and Lady Mountbatten leave Government House for the last time





H m m g L d 23 d j 1948 L f e ght th D k f Ed  
L d M tb tt M Ch tty F M f th G n  
l d M Actl L dy M b tt d th th l th b kg





G dh l Jo y 3l j y 1948

C m t t R j G h t







of great distress about it all. The result was that V P rushed up to Mountbatten's bedroom this morning full of alarm.

Mountbatten was of course able to explain the whole thing and hopes in the next day or so to be able to laugh it off with the Congress leaders but he regards the incident as revealing and points out that if he had not established close relations with V P and if V P had not felt himself able to go straight to his bedroom this morning this petty misunderstanding could easily have developed into a major crisis and may still involve a considerable expenditure of time and effort to explain away to the satisfaction of all.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Monday 28th July 1947*

There was a colourful reception at Viceroy's House to night in honour of over fifty Ruling Princes and a hundred of the States Representatives. The splendour of it only seemed to strengthen the sense of unreality and pathos surrounding the Princely order at this time. When unity of purpose was of overwhelming importance for them they were to be seen uneasy and obsessed with their own problems of precedence each anxiously watching what the other was doing—and as a Dewan remarked of one of them 'wandering about like a letter without a stamp'.

Those of Their Highness who had not already signified their intention of signing the Instrument of Accession were duly shepherded by the A.D.C.s one by one for a friendly talk with Mountbatten. He in his turn passed them on in the full view of the company to V P who conducted them across the room to see Patel. There were Maharajas three deep in a semi-circle watching this process.

One veteran Prince was heard to remark 'Who's H.E. getting to work on now?' Craning forward to see he added with relish 'There's no need for him to work on me. I'm signing tomorrow!' Fay overheard the following exchange between an old Prince and a young one. The old Prince asked 'How are things in your State?' The young prince replied 'We have been having trouble in one place (which he named) but we have reached a settlement now. We have trouble everywhere the old Prince exclaimed but I don't let it reach the stage of a settlement'.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Wednesday 30th July 1947*

Mountbatten left at first light this morning for Calcutta where he is to make a rapid last minute survey of the critical situation there.

During the brief lull provided by his absence I have to-day had my long promised interview with Gandhi arriving at midday for an appointment at his home among the Untouchables in the Bhambi Colony.



I found him on a platform raised a few inches off the ground and reposing on some cushion with a very large bolster at his back. During our conversation two secretaries came in silently and I had as well trained acolytes as I expected to do.

As I noticed Gandhi said smilingly, "You will not expect me to get up." I waived red chairs but I chose—almost subconsciously—standing with a slight dip in front of him. I began by recalling that the last time I had the pleasure of meeting him was seventeen years ago when I was a boy at Westminster School. He had come very unexpectedly to speak to us and we had all been deeply impressed by the event. He said he himself remembered the occasion and added that he had been invited by my kind Canon. I recalled that twelve days afterwards Lord Halifax had come to the School to address us and that on that year of the Irwin Gandhi Pact the birthday memory of the old altar in which each had spoken for the other. Both had left in such boyish days that moment on that here the essential human good for which no agreement could spring. I assuredly called Lord Halifax in those days. Gandhi did not move if I said that I was not so now.

I said that I had just come back from London where I had visited the Indian Independent Bill passed through both Houses of Parliament. It took the canon to present Gandhi with the hopes of the Hindus for the so-called Debates—a gesture that seemed to please him—and drew part of his attention to Lord S. Mulholland to him in the Lords. He said he had not decided it and that it was a very kind of him to have made these remarks. He had once heard me speak of with Lord Samuel and in the argument Lord Samuel had been making as much as enough to dismiss himself in the wrong. That Gandhi observed was very good sign in a man.

Turning to the general situation arising from the Act, he said that with the ending of British dominion at the moment men would be responsible had been thrown upon the Congress leaders who had been brought personally as if I knew for peace and no had the assistance of a State to the disposal. Both Government needed time to breathe the pace in which to establish themselves. He regarded Partition as an evil but was ready to dismiss that out of view would come good if only that Government would play for the high there. I said that that was not simply the future of India that was at stake but that of the whole of Asia. The consequences of South-east Asia in particular were looking at India and the Chinese in a war only enhanced. I did point out the peace. He agreed emphatically. "The whole world," he said, "looking to India as under the microscope."

When I turned to my particular business and noted here—the Press—I mentioned the need for Indian papers to begin

taking a world view and for Indian journalists to gain new experience in overseas assignments. He agreed that the need existed but this particular contention inspired him to take up a favourite theme of his. There is, he said, a dangerous tendency for Indians to look to others for salvation. We must keep our self respect and help ourselves. Look at the case of medicine and doctors. I do not know of a single Englishman who has come to India for treatment but one is always hearing of Indians going abroad to be treated by this or that famous European surgeon. It is not right that India should only be a place for Indians to die in. There are many splendid surgeons including Dr Ansari. Admittedly, he added mischievously, Dr Ansari is concerned primarily with rejuvenation and offering one the chance of becoming thirty again and having a harem!

The core of his argument was that with India now having won her political freedom it was the duty of Indians to show their faith and pride in their country not only by words but also by deeds. They had to realise that the amenities and assets which they had assumed were the monopolies of the outside world were not inevitably so at all. This was the real challenge of Indian Independence.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Friday, 1st August 1947*

I was given an account of to-day's luncheon at Viceroy's House to several of the leading Princes. After paying their bread and butter respects to Their Excellencies they ran the gauntlet of A.D.C.s who helped to form virtual Aye and No lobbies on their attitude to Accession. Jaisalmer and Bikaner entered into the spirit of the thing by passing through the No lobby and then roaring with laughter.

Apart from Hyderabad and Kashmir which present special problems Mountbatten's advice is having a decisive effect and only two or three of the senior Princes seem to consider there is any advantage or merit in holding out against Accession. Unfortunately Mountbatten's friend Bhopal is the leader of this group which includes his close and important neighbour the Maharaja of Indore. As the ablest Moslem Prince I would guess he is not averse to playing an important role in the higher politics of Pakistan. He has for some time been one of Jinnah's closest advisers. Unhappily for him his State is predominantly Hindu and in the heart of Indian territory.

The burden of work falling upon Mountbatten and his staff seems if anything to increase as each day brings us nearer to the transfer of power. I have enough Public Relations and Press problems calling for immediate decision and implementation to keep a whole Central Office of Information busy. Very careful thought has to be given to the planning of the elaborate ceremonial in Karachi and Delhi. Jinnah has raised difficulties about

the degree of precedence to be accorded to Mountbatten. Kar ch on 13th August. It has been politely but not the less firmly made clear to him that His Excellency's staff will be in his capacity a Viceroy and any proposal that he should sit below Jinnah at the special meeting of the Legislative Assembly must be out of the question.

My talks included submissions on drafts of the King's messages to the two new Dominions and assistance in Polish in the texts of Mountbatten's formal Addresses to the two Legislative Assemblies which I had indicated problems of emphasis. Mountbatten would prefer to speak without a script but when he was pressed up on him to do so somewhat grudgingly that this would be appropriate on such historic and formal occasions with the old's Presence and addressing up every word.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Tuesday 5th August 1947*

Following to day Priti's Council and Joint Defence Council meetings Mountbatten was in secret conference with Patel Jinnah and Liquat having decided to introduce them to an officer of the now dissolved Punjab Criminal Investigation Department sent down by Jenkins to give him a reliable report. This first round of verbal statements made by investigators of direct bones arrested after incidents. These negotiations and intelligence from others sources implicated the Sikh leadership in numerous false hostage plans including a plot to assassinate Jinnah during the State of the Independence celebrations in Karachi next week. Jinnah and Liquat immediately demanded the arrest of Tara Singh and other Sikh leaders. Patel however was strongly opposed to this course arguing that it would only precipitate a civil war beyond control.

Mountbatten said he was prepared to support the arrests but only if the authorities on the spot felt that this would be a wise step. He has therefore written off to Jenkins to consider with Tripathi and Mudie the Government's design to fetch East and West Punjab as a matter of emergency the desirability of arresting Tara Singh and his more high-headed colleagues shortly before the 15th August.

Mountbatten has a very high opinion of Jenkins who has held the fort in the Punjab under conditions of intolerable strain and slander. No man would have dared to preserve the last vestiges of order in the distracted Province. He deserves but is far from receiving the gratitude of both sides for his unflinching labours.

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Sir Francis, the Governor of Sindh until the transfer of power subsequently accepted an invitation from Mr Jinnah to be the first Governor of West Punjab.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI *Thursday 7th August 1947*

We have our lighter moments. The Minutes of the sixty eighth Viceroy's Staff Meeting held this evening begin as follows Item 1 Astrology. The Viceroy said that he had just seen Mr Mangaldas Pakwasa the Governor Designate of the Central Provinces and suggested that he should go down on the 13th rather than the 14th August to start taking over from Sir Fredrick Bourne thus enabling Bourne to leave to become Governor of East Bengal by the 15th. Mr Mangaldas Pakwasa had said that this was out of the question on astrological grounds. The Viceroy pointed out that there was a complete lack on his staff of high level advisers on astrology. This would be remedied forthwith. HE the Viceroy appointed Press Attache to the additional and honorary post of Astrologer to the Governor General.

Following the Staff Meeting I met the cause of my astrological appointment Mangaldas Pakwasa at a small lunch party given by Vallabhbhai Patel to which Fry and I were invited. The occasion was informal. In addition to Pakwasa and ourselves there was only one other guest an American visitor Mr Dall Shinkar Patel's Private Secretary who was a contemporary of mine at Oxford and Maniben the Sardar's devoted one might almost say dedicated daughter brought the lunch party up to seven. Patel's home is nearly next door to Nehru's and is if anything smaller and even less pretentious than the Prime Minister's residence.

It is a commonplace to draw the political contrast between Nehru and Patel who after the transfer of power are likely to provide India with a virtual duumvirate but the variations in personality and appearance are hardly less striking. Dressed in his *dhoti* Patel conjures up the vision of a Roman Emperor in his toga. There are in fact Roman qualities about this man—administrative talent the capacity to take and sustain strong decisions and a certain serenity which invariably accompanies real strength of character.

He lacks Nehru's world reputation and world outlook and he has deliberately confined himself to the tasks that involve surveillance of domestic politics. Here his powers and responsibilities are as wide as they well can be they include control over all Government Information Internal Security the Police and last but not least the vital problem of relations with the Indian States. The completion of his Accession policy should bring into the Indian Dominion more citizens than will be lost to it through the creation of Pakistan for (excluding the twenty millions in Hyderabad and Kashmir) there are some ninety million States subjects involved which is considerably more than the population of Pakistan. He also holds in his hands nearly all Congress patronage. This is a formidable concentration of per-

sonal power under any regime. In spite of all these preoccupations Patel had a shrewd grasp of India's strategic position in the world at large.

Off duty as he was today he is indeed the embodiment of the gentle Hindu, full of benevolence and smiles. He was invited to hear my first-hand account of the passing of the Independent Bill in London. In the course of conversation the general subject of peace-making cropped up. He and Maniben lingered when I asked whether he enjoyed making speeches. Maniben's mind gave me the thought her father was great in Gujarati.

Through most of the meal Mr. Menon who is on the inside of all the official and top-secret circles remarked that the last ascetic. Deepened in the austere simplicity of his Khadi and ringing at her wrist a great bunch of keys she gave the impression of an efficient and brilliantly controlled domestic help.

Nearly all the Indian leaders surrounded by women members of the family, his as yet single daughters who exercise not only profound influence on their careers. I had come to India and the naive impression that Indian women were completely submerged and had no say to rest in matters of State. This is only not the case at the summit of affairs. Mrs. Fatima Jinnah, Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Begum Liaquat Ali Khan and Mrs. Kripalani are formidable personalities whose ambitions and interests measure up to those of their respective menfolk. Not all of them would be content to make so quietly in the background as Maniben but it is doubtful whether the influence of any of them in their respective households exceeds hers with her father.

Moreover Lady Mountbatten herself. I know her deeply and proud by her contact with Indian women in the whole field of social service. Not only her capabilities outstanding but they are casting off the shackles of board and status. An important factor in Indian independence is the emancipation of Indian women. Lady Mountbatten's leadership at this time is giving a great fillip to this liberating process.

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, Friday 8th August 1947

Mountbatten had several requests to broadcast to America and on one proposal that he should hold everything to visit the U.S.A. as the star guest at a big Press-sponsored conference. In view of the tremendous pressure upon his time and energy it has been necessary automatically to turn down his request but my decision he has agreed to speak on a special programme which is being broadcast throughout the United States to celebrate the second anniversary of VJ Day. I shall, I believe, be the recorded voice of the leaders of nearly all the United Nations.

Although he will be on the air for only three minutes I feel this presents a splendid opportunity to drive home the double meaning of the 15th August. He asked me to prepare him a draft which he has substantially accepted.

After approving the elaborate arrangements for him to broadcast a recording of his message from his study his words were beamed from All India Radio via the BBC. to America for actual transmission on the 15th. Two years ago to-day, he declared I had just returned from the Potsdam Conference and was in the Prime Minister's room in 10 Downing Street when the news of the Japanese surrender came through. Here as I speak to you to-night in Delhi we are celebrating an event no less momentous for the future of the world—India's Independence Day. In the Atlantic Charter we the British and Americans dedicated ourselves to champion the self-determination of peoples and the independence of nations. Bitter experience has taught us that it is often easier to win a war than to achieve a war aim so let us remember August 15th—VJ Day—not only as the celebration of a victory but also as the fulfilment of a pledge.

VICTORY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Saturday 9th August 1947*

At our Staff Meeting to-day we had a full discussion on the Punjab crisis. Over and above reports from Jenkins of a most serious situation in the boundary area and urgent requests from him for more army, air and police reinforcements. Mountbatten was confronted with a Public Relations problem of some magnitude which had a direct bearing on the maintenance of morale and order.

It is rumoured that Radcliffe will be ready by this evening to hand over the Award of the Punjab Boundary Commission to the Viceroy. Following the expected but none the less complete failure of his Hindu and Moslem colleagues to reach any semblance of agreement Radcliffe under the terms of reference has had only to consult himself. Responsibility for publication however rests with the Viceroy. Mountbatten from the outset had given his staff the most explicit directions that they were to have no contact whatever with Radcliffe while he was engaged on his difficult and delicate arbitral task and has himself kept clear of him after the first welcome. We had accordingly no firm knowledge how far or by what route he had proceeded.

Various points of view about publication were put forward. On administrative grounds it was argued that earliest possible announcement would be of help to Jenkins and would enable last minute troop movements to be made into the affected areas in advance of the transfer of power. Alternatively it was suggested that in so far as the Award would in any case be bound to touch off trouble it best due to reveal it would be on the 14th August. Mountbatten said that if he could exercise some

discretion in the matter he would much prefer to postpone the appearance until after the Independence Day celebration feeling that the probability of its timing is really a question of psychology and that the controversy and grief that it is bound to arouse on both sides should not be allowed to mar Independence Day itself.

With this I wholly concur and would go further and say that for the Redifford to precede or coincide with Independence Day would be to risk destroying at one stroke the whole symbolic significance of freedom to Hindu Moslem and Sikh alike. The Indian policy of friendship can be successfully frustrated by expectation and environment alike make the margin between happenings and mounting danger unusually narrow. The condition of history is that it should be understood and that it should have temporary refuge from his eternal fires.

No final decision was taken at our meeting to day and although instructed further to discuss the timing problem with Jenkins. To underline the independent status of the commissions Mountbatten decided that the announcement when it is made should not be in the form of a memorandum to the Viceroy's House but should be published in the Gazette Extraordinary.

Jenkins has firmly rejected any suggestion that the Sikh leaders should be arrested before 15th August. He has advised Mountbatten that he thoroughly discussed the suggestion with Mudie and Trevor and they were all unanimously recommending that such arrest would be most likely to endanger the improvement of the present precarious situation. All three had therefore decided that no arrests should be made. Mountbatten feels that he has arranged as well as with Jinnah in the State process in which the occasion merits for the possible attempt on Jinnah's life. He can accept the decision without personal reproach.

VICEROY'S HOUSE NEW DELHI Tuesday 12th August 1947

Three days have passed since the first warning and the Award is still not ready. At the afternoon's Staff Meeting—our seventeenth and probably the last—Mountbatten agreed on a few of the uncertainties and our impending departure for Karachi that John Christie and I should call on the Delhi Commission directly to find out whether we might expect the Award to be in the Viceroy's hands. For this discussion of his stay in Delhi Redifford is going to the Comptroller's House in the Victoria Gate where he would work in isolation. Christie and I hurriedly found at every hour not only arranged and that it was hanging for dinner. When he appeared on the scene it was clear that our interview would not be an easy one, and that it was just much all to the proprieties of the situation as we were. He explained that both

the Punjab and Bengal Awards were complete and ready but that the Sylhet Award was not.

It seemed therefore that unless Mountbatten was to make a major issue of the matter it would be physically very difficult for all three Awards to come into his possession before his return to Delhi on the evening of 14th August or for the texts to be printed and available before the 16th—Independence Day itself being a national holiday. We returned at once to Viceroy's House and advised Mountbatten of the position who was greatly relieved to have this ready made solution at his disposal.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### INDEPENDENCE DAYS

**GOVERNMENT HOUSE KARACHI** *Wednesday 13th August 1947*  
MOUNTBATTEN LEFT FOR Karachi this morning to perform his last official duty as Viceroy of a united British India. This is appropriately enough to convey His Majesty's and his own greetings to the new Dominion of Pakistan on the eve of its inception. As we stepped off the aircraft Their Excellencies were greeted by Hidayatullah the benign Governor elect of Sind. There was also the usual bevy of photographers. As they drove off to Government House Colonel Birnie Jinnah's Military Secretary told Mountbatten that he had been given information of a plot to throw a bomb at Jinnah during to-morrow's State procession and that there had been discussions as to whether to cancel the drive or alter the route. Jinnah however had taken the view that if Mountbatten was ready to go through with the drive then so was he. Mountbatten at once agreed that there should be no change of arrangements.

Jinnah and Miss Jinnah were awaiting the Mountbattens in the entrance hall which had been decked up to look just like a Hollywood film set and all four were subjected to takings and re takings under the dazzling light and sizzling heat of the arc lamps. I made contact with Colonel Malik the Government Information officer at the Palace Hotel and met some of the Foreign correspondents who were rather critical of the Karachi proceedings to date. Some argued that Mountbatten had been insulted by Jinnah not being at the airfield to meet him but I at once explained that I was sure Mountbatten did not consider that there had been any lack of courtesy or breach of etiquette involved. At yesterday's Constituent Assembly there had been



they said an atmosphere of complete subservience with every one vying to utter everyone else in verbal prostration before the Quaid-e-Azam.

In answer to my explicit inquiries Malik gave me clearly to understand that Jinnah was not proposing to make any set speech for publication at tonight's banquet and I added Mountbatten accordingly. Imagine my surprise when towards the end of the banquet before all the assembled notabilities comprising not only the Pakistan elite but far from negligible nucleus of a Diplomatic Corps Jinnah rose and just did his monologue and began reading with deliberation and in what I believed emphasis from a set script. The speech turned out to be one of considerable political significance in particular for its official reference to the new Dominion future relation with Britain and to Mountbatten combined but on to the creation of Pakistan.

If Mountbatten felt any dismay at being caught in this sort of calambour he certainly did not show it and by a fine feat of improvisation gave the impression of being even more words-perfect than the Quaid-e-Azam with his note. For ten minutes the appropriate phrase and thoughts flowed from him in smooth equanimity. He is a born raconteur and his informal but quick fire eloquence is delightfully adapted to after-dinner speech-making.

Thus was not the only hazard triumphantly surmounted tonight. About quarter of nine before everyone was all due to take their places to dine young Lieutenant Ahsan who's first day it was as ADC to Jinnah following his transfer from Viceroy's House decided that there distinguished guests might be up on the table plan had failed to arrive. Bill Bine and the writhed ADCs were thus left with the decision whether to leave gaps in high places or undertake the risk of the seating plan though with stout resolve they chose the latter. Mountbatten and Jinnah rose once deduced of the dilemma and played their part in the operation by maintaining poise and calm talk for over half an hour while the staff in the feverish reaction went on.

After dinner we were met by a large reception and to an accompaniment of soft drinks and sweet music played by a band of bearded waiters in kilt the party ran its appointed course. Considering what lay behind it the arrangements—the hurried last-minute trial of many official creation of a Government and game almost overnight—the reception was an admirable strategic triumph. Jinnah himself as the host and her of the occasion was an all of almost entirely figure which may have helped to create a somewhat subdued atmosphere at the first moment. He was concerned with his slender harp and mace and white *ashika* twinkling above most of his guests and talk of very few of them. They for their part did not presume to

button hole him. Here indeed was the apotheosis of leadership by remote control.

I had never dreamt that the creator of a nation at the moment of reaching the promised land could when surrounded by his devoted followers be at such a distance from them. Finding him standing alone I spoke with him for a few moments. I tried to find suitable words of congratulation but they died away before his mood of preoccupation almost of reverie.

#### GOVERNMENT HOUSE, KARACHI AND GOVERNMENT HOUSE

NEW DELHI *Thursday Friday 14th 15th August 1947*

Accommodation at Government House Karachi is strictly limited. The number of V.I.P.s here for to-day's ceremonies has taxed Bill Birnie's resources to the utmost. Housing and hotel shortage is acute but by dint of dispersing and doubling up we were all successfully accommodated.

We were up early this morning for the ceremonies at the Legislative Assembly. I arrived about half an hour before Jinnah and the Mountbattens passing along part of the official route. Neither the scale nor the enthusiasm of the crowds was anything like as great as I had expected. It did not seem to be on a higher pitch than some annual opening of Parliament. In the grounds facing the Assembly however with its small semi-circular shell shaped chamber every available inch was occupied. The Mountbattens as they drove up were given the same cordial reception as the Jinnahs who had arrived a few minutes ahead of them. Cordiality too was the key note of both Mountbattens and Jinnah's speeches and of the reaction of the assembled Members. The precedence problem died a natural death. Lady Mountbatten pressed Miss Jinnah's hand affectionately as Jinnah sat down after giving his address.

If Jinnah's personality is cold and remote it also has a magnetic quality—the sense of leadership is almost overpowering. He makes only the most superficial attempt to disguise himself as a constitutional Governor General and one of his first acts after putting his name forward was to apply for powers under the 9th Schedule rather than Part II of the 1935 Act which gave him at once dictatorial powers unknown to any constitutional Governor General representing the King. Here indeed is Pakistan's King, Emperor, Archbishop of Canterbury, Speaker and Prime Minister concentrated into one formidable *Quaid-e-Azam*.

The proceedings were over within the hour and Jinnah and Mountbatten drove back in State together. Once again the greetings of the crowd apart from some lorryloads of hilarious sailors of the Pakistan Navy and the usual excitement of children were decorous rather than ecstatic. As they turned in at the gates of Government House Jinnah put his hand on Mountbatten's knee and said with evident emotion: "Thank God I have brought you



tryst with destiny and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge not wholly or in full measure but substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour when the world sleeps India will awake to life and freedom.

Wearily but happy having escaped from the greetings of tremendous throngs Prasad and Nehru finally arrived. In the little scene that ensued friendship completely burst the bounds of formality. The Press correspondents flanked the room, photographers stood on the circular table. Although Nehru had given approval that the Press should be there I think he must have forgotten that he had done so. Whether it was the presence of an audience or just the normal reaction after the great scenes in the Assembly neither of them seemed to know quite what to do.

Finally Mountbatten and Prasad stood facing each other with Nehru half sitting on Mountbatten's desk between them. Prasad began murmuring a formal invitation. However he forgot his lines and Nehru played the role of benign prompter. Between them they explained that the Constituent Assembly had just taken over and had endorsed the request of the leaders that Mountbatten should become the first Governor General. To this message he smilingly replied, "I am proud of the honour and I will do my best to carry out your advice in a constitutional manner."

Thereupon Nehru, handing over a large and carefully addressed envelope said in ceremonious terms, "May I submit to you the portfolios of the new Cabinet?" The ceremony was all over in less than ten minutes but there was more humanity and hope in this unrehearsed encounter than in most of our Te Deums and victory parades.

I was once more alone with Mountbatten. Just to satisfy his curiosity and remind himself of the exact names of the Government to which he had previously agreed and which he would be swearing in in a few hours' time he opened the large envelope but he was not to see his Prime Minister's submission that night for by sublime oversight Nehru's envelope was empty.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Friday, 15th August 1947*

I doubt whether it will be given to me to live through a more crowded or memorable day than this.

At 10 the trumpets and the scarlet and gold which had heralded in twenty Viceroys summoned the State entrance of the newly created Earl Mountbatten of Burma into the Durbar Hall, the first Governor General of the free India. The strangeness of this great occasion lay not in its points of contrast with Mountbatten's earlier Viceregal installation but in its essential similarity to the March ceremony. Now of course it was the function of an Indian Chief Justice, Dr Bhanu, to administer the Oath to the Governor-General and for an Indian Secretary of the Home



Truman's message—a lapse which was remedied only after Dr Grady the American Ambassador had expostulated in a loud whisper

To the usual accompaniment of photographic barrage, Mountbatten then rose to address the Assembly. He began by reading out the King's message which was cordially received and then proceeded to speak with far more emphasis and spirit than he usually does when he has to keep to a script. Although the words had been carefully chosen their underlying sincerity quickly drew the sympathy and applause of the packed Assembly. References to the success of the Accession policy to his request to be regarded as one of yourselves and to the leadership of Nehru and Patel were all acclaimed. But his solicitude for Gandhi drew the most prolonged cheers and it was some time before he could proceed.

In appearance he looked magnificent but approachable. As one Indian put it: His gift for friendship has triumphed over everything. It was psychologically sound for him to stress that he would definitely go when his work was completed in April. He also succeeded in convincing his audience that no pressure would be put upon them to stay within the Commonwealth. They were entirely free to make their own choice. Many told me afterwards how delighted they were that his speech had been so substantial. That it was in effect a policy declaration undoubtedly came as a welcome surprise.

Prasad followed with a long address which he spoke first in Hindi and then in English. In both languages he was almost inaudible. Of the Congress elder statesmen Prasad is a moderate by conviction and temperament. Where some of his colleagues may be lured into the pursuit of dialectical points beyond the bounds of good sense or self interest Prasad rarely indulges himself in outbursts or over statements. To day he spoke from the heart. Let us gratefully acknowledge, he said, while our achievement is in no small measure due to our own sufferings and sacrifices it is also the result of world forces and events and last though not least it is the consummation and fulfilment of the historic tradition and democratic ideals of the British race. After tributes to the Mountbattens as representatives of that race he added: The period of domination of Britain over India ends to day and our relationship with Britain is henceforward going to rest on a basis of equality of mutual good will and mutual profit.

After the speeches the National flag was unfurled on the Council House and a salvo of thirty-one guns was fired. The Mountbattens' drive home was only the second of several tumultuous rides during the day and all the way back to Government House the cries of Jai Hind were mixed with Mountbatten Ki and even Pandit Mountbatten!



that he could neither get on with his journey nor get off his machine Fay Marjorie Brockman and Pamela Nicholls were all trapped between the stands and the dais but cheerful people shouted 'Make way for the memsahibs!' Fay finally reached the BBC recording van where Wynford Vaughan Thomas was frantically engaged on one of his most vivid and spectacular outside broadcasts He told me afterwards that it was the greatest crowd scene he had ever witnessed

Suddenly the cheering swelled into a roar and from where I stood I could just catch a glimpse of the ADCs in white followed by the fluttering lance pennants of the Governor General's Body Guard then the Governor General's carriage and more Body Guard The carriage and escort moving fitfully at last reached a point about twenty five yards from the flagstaff I could see the Mountbattens standing up waving to the crowd which was cheering and waving back at them Nehru made some last frantic efforts to call for order and clear a little space but his pleas were in vain so there was no alternative but for Mountbatten to stay in his carriage, and while the flag was being hoisted take the salute from there

Just as the flag was unfurled light rain began to fall and a rainbow appeared in the sky matching the saffron white and green of the flag If Hollywood had added this last touch we would all have complained that once again they were overdoing it as it was it would seem to provide a dramatic omen to refute the gloomier astrologers I must confess it would have taken a man of iron scepticism to be unimpressed by such an augury at such a moment

Mountbatten's return journey to Government House was the final triumph of friendly informality Nehru was unable to get back to his car so Mountbatten pulled him into the State carriage where he sat on the hood En route four women a child and a Press photographer in grave danger of being crushed under the wheels were duly rescued by Mountbatten and joined the party helping to swell the numbers in the carriage to twelve—shades of Curzon and his Durbars!

Then as grand finale to this historic day we repaired to the State banquet at Government House which was attended by most of the Cabinet Diplomatic Corps and military and civilian leaders One or two of the Princes who felt uneasy about their degree of precedence when in the company of members of the new Government were the only notable absentees The climax was reached when Nehru rose to propose the health of the King and Mountbatten replied with the toast of the Dominion Government Both speeches delivered without notes were for the benefit of the assembled guests alone There were thus none of the restraints imposed by the demands of world publicity





Munshi's comment on Mountbatten's appointment as Governor General —

No power in history he writes but Great Britain would have conceded independence with such grace and no power but India would have so gracefully acknowledged the debt.



*Part II*

THE FIRST GOVERNOR-GENERAL



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### WAR OF SUCCESSION

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Saturday 16th August 1947*  
VERY EARLY THIS morning the National flag was hoisted over the Red Fort in Old Delhi and Nehru addressed a crowd estimated at some half a million stretching I am told all the way to that other monument of Moghul splendour the mighty Mosque of the Jama Masjid. But the rejoicings of the morning were all too soon tempered by the depression of the leaders this afternoon when Mountbatten handed over to them the Radcliffe Award. He allowed them two hours in which to digest its terms before summoning a formal meeting in the Council Chamber of Government House. Liaquat was there and not the least of Mountbatten's achievements in Karachi this week was in securing Jinnah's reluctant agreement for Liaquat to make this visit at all coming as it did within twenty four hours of his assumption of the Premiership of Pakistan. I was present at this sombre and sullen gathering where the only unanimity was in denunciation of this or that communal injustice. The field was thus left clear for Mountbatten to point with well timed emphasis the moral that in so far as it was impossible for all the parties to be equally satisfied with Radcliffe's verdict the best evidence of its fairness seemed to rest in the undoubted equality of their displeasure.

We were given the first shots of what will undoubtedly be a prolonged and passionate controversy. Liaquat's dismay at the inclusion of the Gurdaspur District in East Punjab was offset by Patel's anger over the Chitragong Hill Tracts passing to Eastern Pakistan while the resentment of both was blanketed by Baldev's dumb depression. None of the Leaders however saw fit to carry their criticism to the point of repudiating their unconditional pledge made in advance to accept the Award whatever its terms might be.

LATER as we met momentous news was coming in from both the partitioned Provinces which provided at once a warning and an example of the need for bold leadership. In the Punjab the people are taking the situation into their own hands. What Jenkins has aptly termed the war of succession has broken out in full fury in the land of the five rivers. This afternoon Atchinko gave a terse and terrifying situation report to the Leaders which has caused them to decide on an immediate reinforcement of the Boundary Force.



ary Force and the Press attacks being made upon it both in the *Hindustan Times* and the *Indian News Chronicle* V P said there was a growing feeling on both sides that the new Governments should have more direct military control over their respective areas. Mountbatten agreed that although the Boundary Force was undoubtedly the best military answer to the problem he was ready to concede that in this instance psychological reasons might outweigh purely military ones. His mind was moving in favour of retrocession of the Boundary Force's area.

We then discussed the Press situation. V P thought we should not take the Delhi Press too seriously as the big Provincial papers were all very steady on the issue. The *Hindustan Times* this morning carried a direct attack on Rees and a most objectionable cartoon implying that the Supreme Command's Headquarters were deliberately depriving the Dominion Armies of good officers in order to retain big jobs for themselves. As a result of our talk Mountbatten has decided that he will see Devadas Gandhi and Sahni the *Hindustan Times* and the *Indian News Chronicle's* editors this afternoon and has instructed me to arrange the meeting.

Devadas and Sahni duly arrived at four o'clock anticipating I suspect a chilly reception but Mountbatten was in his best form delivering his disapproval from behind a smoke screen of engaging frankness. He has the rare knack of combining vehemence with *bonhomie*. He started the session with a general homily on the need to avoid attacking the military who cannot answer for themselves. If soldiers begin answering back you get a situation he said as in Mexico where they throw out the editors. As against this dangerous example he stressed the recent case of General Barker in Palestine where Press criticism of the General's conduct was levelled not at the General himself but at Bellenger the Secretary of State for War and the Minister answerable to Parliament for the General's actions.

Mountbatten then turned to a general account of what was happening in the Punjab. The Sikhs he said had launched an attack just as Giani Kartar Singh and Tara Singh before the 3rd June had told him they would. Mountbatten had expostulated with them at the time, stressing that the British would have gone. It would be Indian fighting Indian. But they were adamant, and had in fact observed that they were waiting for us to go. The situation was now out of their control. In an area less than two hundred by one hundred and fifty miles containing some seventeen thousand inhabited localities and only about the size of Wales some ten million people were on the move. At the moment through the withdrawal of all the Moslems the police in the East Punjab were suddenly and catastrophically weakened under strength.





taken to disband the Boundary Force. Pete Rees received very few thanks from either side for his efforts to carry out a task of unparalleled difficulty. Without the whole hearted backing of the Governments and Press on both sides the position of the Boundary Force and its Commander became rapidly untenable and otherwise steady and experienced troops began to feel the tug of communal loyalties deeper even than their military discipline.

Now that the Punjab Boundary Force and the Joint Defence Council's authority over it are at an end Mountbatten's last executive responsibility lapses. He considers that as a matter of policy he should confirm his new constitutional status by freeing himself from day to day contact with the executive or from any direct administrative interference in the Government's action to restore the immediate situation. He has accordingly decided to go ahead with earlier arrangements and visit Simla for ten days of well-earned and badly needed rest.

Meanwhile Ismay has gone for his much needed rest to Kashmir and has been asked by Mountbatten to do his best to get the Maharaja to make up his vacillating mind and accede without further delay to whichever Dominion he and his people desire thus ending the uncertain and dangerously unstable position in Kashmir.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### RESPONSE TO EMERGENCY

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Saturday 6th September 1947*  
WE WERE ON the road early yesterday morning arriving at Government House during the afternoon where we found V. P. Swarup waiting Mountbatten with a message from Patel hoping that he will grip the situation firmly without delay. Nehru came round immediately to enlist his active and overriding authority to deal with the emergency followed by Patel.

The decision of the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of the new India taken only three weeks after the exhilaration of Independence to recall Mountbatten in this way is a great tribute to the quality of their character and leadership. For by this act they have shown themselves big enough to recognise that Mountbatten's experience in high level administration is something which they have not yet acquired.

After Mountbatten had had two or three hours of himself fully of the scale of the crisis he put

agency Committee should be set up. This was at once agreed to by Nehru and Patel and at their instance Mountbatten accepted the chairmanship. Nothing less will meet the case for the various facts confronted with the deadly perils of war emergency without having available the necessary instruments or priorities of the Government. With the spread of communal fevers and frenzy which were witnessed in the Punjab the scale of the killing and the movement for fugitive become even more extensive than those caused by the mere formal conflicts of opposing communities. The history of the great migrations of history the people themselves have laid down and create conditions which many an empire but none can manage.

The fact that Delhi is itself a centre of this earthquake automatically creates a crisis in the national order. In the recent Punjab catastrophe perhaps the most deadly for India then for Pakistan. The capital Karachi is at a safe distance from the disturbance. Meanwhile Jinnah on his side has already made an urgent broadcast appeal to the people to help in restoring peace and in building up the new State. Even the Boundary Award unjust and imprudent and even pervading Muslim had agreed to abide by it. The new nation should see to it that what had been won by the people was not lost by the Government.

It is easy to forget how far to the north Delhi lies from the end of Mount Everest. This is the whole argument that it has always been to be removed from the hub of Indian life and that the Partition thus by itself reinforced but a minority change of capital is nothing a compulsory evacuation by the new Government then a month of it during independence quite another. And this is undoubtedly the case for nearly half a million refugees remain. The words the city already overcrowded bringing in the train and road and wholly beyond Delhi's administration at all resources to control.

Mountbatten had no hesitation in doing on his own staff in view of the first meeting of the Emergency Committee of the Cabinet for which he was to preside later in the afternoon. We were all asked to make recommendations and we all felt that the disposal of the Committee is many being recalled from Kashmir.

My own suggestion to help meet the Press and Public Relations side of the problem involved proposal to secure the earliest possible publicity link up with Pakistan the renaming and regarding of the Committee to Council of State the appointment of a Public Relation sub-Committee to consist if possible of a representative from the Ministry of Information the Commander-in-Chief's staff and myself the firm avoidance of censorship which the Government may be tempted to impose and finally the importance of playing down Mountbatten's role as chairman.

With this last concept Mountbatten whole heartedly concurred as also with my views on the dangers of censorship. The Council of State concept was not seriously discussed and owing to the tempo of the days events can be said to have been still born. The Public Relations sub Committee was no sooner mentioned than it was approved and I was commissioned to promote it at once with the Ministry of Information and the Commander in Chief.

Mountbatten's reaction to the crisis was to set in motion procedure already tried and proved both at COHQ and in SEAC. He said his objective was to convert the Emergency Committee into a daily staff meeting at which spokesmen from every department of the command (in this instance Government Departments) could raise and answer questions. Out of these meetings priorities as between departments would be established. Once again Mountbatten showed himself a firm believer in the sovereignty of discussion. Only by this means does he consider that the snags can quickly be uncovered and the solutions found.

He also resolved to resume his old war and map-room procedure to provide the Cabinet and himself with the maximum factual information by visual aid both with regard to the number of disturbances and the movement of refugees. To this end he has decided to call in Pete Rees whose Boundary Force Command closed down last week to become head of a small Military Emergency Staff operating inside Government House. Pamela who with her medical and welfare work and her Presidency of the Caravan Club (an Indian youth movement) has already done her full share to keep the Mountbatten flag flying is to be his personal assistant.

The first Emergency Committee met in the Council Chamber of Government House at five o'clock and sat for over two hours. Nehru opened the proceedings by turning to Mountbatten and saying "I will only take your advice on one condition—that you will take the chair." And Mountbatten accepted under another condition that the fact is not to be published. Complete secrecy will be difficult but as I stressed at an earlier Staff Meeting there could be no keener advocate of Press and Radio silence on this assignment than myself and I am determined to do all in my power to maintain it.

It has been agreed that the Committee should consist only of essential Cabinet Ministers and other vital people such as the Commander in Chief, the Supreme Commander's representative, the Chief Commissioner of Delhi, the Chief of Police, the Director General of Civil Aviation, Medical and Railway representatives. Everyone else is to be co-opted as required. The Ministers who are to join Nehru and Patel as permanent members are Baldev Singh (Defence), Matthai (Railways) and Neogy (in the

newly creat d post of Refug e ) Altogether fifteen of us were there fo th ntal meeting

The gene l mood at th utset as of d zed bewilderment and aimles ness before th nkno n N hru for wh m all th h rror of the first mo th of Indep denc seemed to come the cruci fixion f h s lfe ork l oked inexpress bly sad and resgn d P t l clearly di tu bed w th deep a g r and fru trati n But f r Mountb tt n we ghed do n by n of thes nner misg 1 gs th ccas on call d f r th ll h s pow r of obj ctve and dyn m c decisi n d h t nce radated nfidence nd a sen e of p p whe none had existed b f re

As soon as the actu l t t ut n of the Comm ttee had b e d ded w p mptly pl nged into a n mb r of most im med te tems The Ministry of R f g had stll t be set up Th C mmittee w t d t kn w by the next m rning th name f the pers n pp int d to be secretary to th Ministry ll then proceeded to tackle the difficult st u g nt probl m f ccom m d tng th h lly n w Department I m y s g ven the task of acting n a h is n pa ty b tw en the Emergency C mmitte nd th P kist n G v nment

In the ge e l l t g t g g r newly fledged Publ Re l t ns C mmitte h b n d t d t t t mpt t improv th t nd d f portng of th Delhi newspapers on th ommun l t t d t pot On th ccas I th nk the result vill be l m t d t ou pot g b t t m d y ne f el good nd th t th crux of the matt r

Th r w n h st d cuss on on the mpositi n f mar t l law Mountb tt n co d th t g f r it in th Punj b but nly f ll fo r G v nment c nc ned are dy to back t As th s e med on the whole u likely the C m mitt call d f r u g nt xam n t on f y d m ns t stuffen u tng acts n force in the East Punj b Altog th r me tvel e items le d f m th ll g p of a rel ef comm tte u der Lady Mountb tten to the contr l f RAF t rt and the dr pp g f l fl t f m th f g of assets to the ds posal of jeeps E eryon l ll th es on somewhat breathles

T m T ed the East Punj b G n th ll Prime M ter Gopi Chand Bh ga and Home M nster Sw ran Ngh are to attend th C mmittee

Fr m C lcutta comes ne s of Gandh s m ncl ll ntal partnershp th S h rw dy d d t ch e all th t h had ll ped solated st bb a d acts of sole ce cont d So o Monday h b g n a f t t end nly f nty return d t the ty On Th day he s abl t c ll t ff ter le der of th vario s mmun te h d g en guar ntees th t the mas e had alre dy resp d d to the Mahatm s appeal thr gh s ul resist ance for a chang of he t

After one of his Prayer Meetings Hindus and Moslems by their thousands mingled and embraced in the Maidan. Hardened Press correspondents report that they have seen nothing comparable with this demonstration of mass influence. Mountbatten's estimate is that he has achieved by moral persuasion what four Divisions would have been hard pressed to have accomplished by force.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI Sunday 7th September 1947

Our meeting began at eleven but Trivedi and the East Punjab Ministers failed to arrive on time. Mountbatten started off by reporting that the situation in Delhi had worsened very considerably during the previous twenty four hours. There had been a large number of incidents including the stabbing of employees on the Government House estate and far too many refugees were coming through before there was any organisation to receive them.

He turned at once to the question of banning the carrying of all weapons which of course raised in its turn the problem of the *kirpans* or swords worn by the Sikhs. Patel felt that any suggestion of banning *kirpans* would raise great difficulties as they had been recognised by the Government as religious weapons for many years. Mountbatten argued that the unqualified right of Sikhs to carry *kirpans* at this time stood in the way of precautions for law and order taken by every city in the world but he agreed that the basic question was which decision would lead to fewer people being killed—the banning of the *kirpan* or the safeguarding of Sikh religious feeling?

If we go down in Delhi Mountbatten warned we are finished. Ismay suggested reinforcing the police with a cadre of special constables. Patel was doubtful but Nehru in favour. Trivedi finally arrived at ten to one starting off with an impassioned speech which was clearly based on the mistaken assumption that the Emergency Committee was nothing other than a Grand Inquisition on himself and his Government. In answer to Mountbatten's inquiry about the East Punjab's capacity to preserve law and order and suggestion that this was the problem of top priority Trivedi replied that the most urgent issue confronting him was the evacuation of refugees.

In view of the late arrival of the East Punjab contingent it was decided to meet again later in the day and we resumed at 6 p.m. It was a rather better meeting this time. Nehru and Patel stood firm about the Sikhs and there is to be a ban on all weapons. "I will not tolerate Delhi becoming another Lahore." Patel declared and Nehru added "I am certain in my mind *kirpans* may have to be taken away. Jeeps also are to be stopped from plying the streets—Nehru speaking of them as a source of much mischief."

The reports coming in which show the Delhi situation to be rapidly deteriorating call for coolness and strength. There has been a massacre at Wilingdon Field and the Sikhs have delayed their attack to the Australian High Commissioner and to the United States Ambassador. Mountbatten wanted the meeting that the whole representation of India sat in provided complete physical security for its diplomatic representatives.

As taken of his resolution to be known, the action Mountbatten has put his Body Guard at the disposal of the Garrison Command. Normally the Delhi Garrison is of brigade strength. But it has been reshuffled into battalions by battalion into the riot-torn Gurgaon district to try to keep the trouble out of the city itself. When the trouble came in there was simply no Garrison available. The Body Guard certainly a corps of discipline and order to police the perfect non-immunized discipline they have been patrolling the streets in sections of armed cavalry each consisting of one manned by Punjab Muslims and one by Sikhs operating in concert.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI: Monday 8th September 1947  
Less than forty-eight hours after our return Mountbatten in his private room in the St. James Hotel in the afternoon next to the Council Chamber it designed to provide members of the Emergency Committee before the morning meetings with intelligence reports—supportive by usual aids—of the situation and the fugitive elements on both sides of the Punjab Boundary. Much midnight oil has been burned to get the maps and flags in the correct position time for the morning meeting. There was a somewhat noisy discussion as to the proceeding the unfortunate Lieutenant-Colonel Dillidill in the situation report to the assembled tables seated while doing so—undoubtedly from an error.

My afternoon engagement over to the first meeting of the United Council for Relief and Welfare—until ended at midnight only for prolonged discussion—which is designed to coordinate the going column of voluntary relief. Lady Mountbatten is in the chair and handled this body of volunteers as a whole with a perfect blend of charm and strength. They emerged from the session a potent team with a central purpose. No fewer than fifteen different organizations were represented. The Government House today added it is safe to say that only the emergency together with Lady Mountbatten's administrative and diplomatic skill could have brought them under one roof to pool their experience and effort.

Pete Howes tells me candidly that among the many emergency duties falling on Mountbatten's British and Indian ADC attendance on Lady Mountbatten is hardly the most popular. For

in the course of her tours of hospitals it usually involves assisting her to bring in to the local infirmaries any bodies they may see in the streets. She is not deterred from carrying out these errands of mercy even when passing through areas where sniping is going on.

In the evening I had a long talk with the Nawab of Chhatari the Nizam's Prime Minister. While anxious to be loyal to His Exalted Highness he is finding it hard to interpret the diverse instructions he receives. Clearly his period of office and influence has not long to run. He and Monckton who are both staying at Government House had a meeting with Mountbatten to-day.

In the present emergency here in Delhi Hyderabad appears a less pressing problem which makes Mountbatten think that this may be the psychological opportunity to promote the verbal variant to accession. At the Hyderabad end the Nizam in token of his desire to retain Monckton's services issued a week ago a strongly worded *firman* (or official statement) condemning the attacks made on the members of his delegation as damaging the interests of the State. This he followed up with letters to Mountbatten confirming his confidence in Monckton and repudiating in picturesque terms the activities of the Itchad and in particular of its financial president Kasim Rizvi.

But while the Nizam himself may be moving haltingly towards an accommodation Congress intelligence (which is remarkably well informed on States' affairs) has been picking up disquieting dirt about the efforts of the Nizam's Government to place orders for armaments in Czechoslovakia and in general to build up its separate sovereignty. Chhatari however is well aware that any such course would be disastrous for Hyderabad and India alike and the mood of to-day's meeting was one of genuine desire on both sides to break through the deadlock. It has been conceded that the principals in the negotiations may not be able to agree on a formula at the first attempt and on this understanding it was decided that Monckton and Chhatari should return to Hyderabad in a fresh effort to narrow the gap.

Just before turning in I looked out from my bedroom window towards the old city. I could see several big fires rising and half expected to hear the wail of air raid sirens and the drone of aircraft (or at least the shouting of mobs) but whatever horror and sufferings were being endured at that moment no word of them reached out to me to break the sultry and sinister silence of the night. In pursuit of feature pieces there is a British Press report of 11½ million people fighting in the blazing streets of Delhi but this is manifestly gross exaggeration and gives a wholly misleading picture of the furtive hit and run character of so much of this arson and murder. I want to try to see for myself what is really happening.



GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Tuesday 9th September 1947*

To day Mountbatten has seen Gandhi who has just arrived in Delhi from his marches in Calcutta about which his characteristically by and self-deprecating. He confessed to Mountbatten that he had changed his mind about Government House which hitherto he had denunciated as the symbol of alien and false power. Now he is glad to find that it has been kept as a useful and necessary institution. He was on the edge of the emergency staff and the Committee working and deliberating far from the public clamour many will have said the Central Government.

The morning Emergency Committee meeting had before it reports of a serious situation developing in Peshawar and other parts of the North-West Frontier Province and in Pakistan. The immediate reaction to this is that the first There are moments when one feels that they set too narrow a objective with some overwhelming difficulty and that there is no real awareness that the issue of communal feud to its end must manifestly laughte.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Thursday 11th September 1947*

V.P. Mehta has been the Emergency Committee meeting that the Delhi situation is undoubtedly improving and that the Sikh were not making a plea. But the meeting itself is getting the impression that I.T.W. is changing his mind on the question. This is quite a brisk exchange between the two strong men of the Government. Mr. Dehra and Nehru is not to be justified in the name of religion. This is not fair. Patel is to be the spokesman of religion but the Government must respect all religions.

A Delhi Emergency Committee has now been set up to deal specifically with the situation in the capital and to leave the Cabinet Emergency Committee from which it is derived its authority free to deal with the development. One of the most dynamic members of the Cabinet is C.H. Bhabha the Commerce Minister. Bhabha and H.M. Patel the Cabinet Secretary have been asked to form. It will substantially take over the Municipal Administration and meet on the same day today basis the parent body which was in danger of becoming lost in the jungle of local details.

In order to bring the emergency home to us Lady Mountbatten has very judiciously imposed a temporary Government House Pitching. At dinner party for our distinguished guests Lord Litton and Sir Gilbert Laithwaite. Their Excellencies and

The Earl of Listowel succeeded Lord Pethick-Lawrence as the last Secretary of State for India in April and Sir Gilbert Laithwaite was then his Departmental chief.

guests with customary ceremonial were regaled with a three course repast consisting of some cabbage water masquerading as soup one piece of spam and potato a biscuit and a small portion of cheese Listowel was impressed but not quite as it was perhaps intended he should be for he asked one of us afterwards whether this dinner had been specially laid on for his benefit!

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Friday 12th September 1947*

This morning's Emergency Committee was a bad meeting one Minister defeating its purpose by raising a whole series of low level departmental problems and another simply grinning at his Ministry's lack of office accommodation. No sense of grip was conveyed. It has for instance taken all day to get a loud speaker for the Purana Qila Fort which Moslem evacuees in their thousands have converted into a veritable ghetto. From the account given at the meeting the Purana Qila situation is clearly very grave. Nearly eighty per cent of the refugees there have been inoculated but there is hardly any food coming in to them and without loud speakers it is impossible to impose order upon the confusion or create confidence from the prevailing panic.

This evening at six o'clock Nehru addressed the Diplomatic Corps in the Map Room. This was his first contact with them since the onset of the crisis. He spoke with telling simplicity and frankness and made no attempt to score debating points or hide behind apologies. With the scholar's eye he related the immediate incidents of the tragedy to the deeper trends. The history of India, he said, has been one of assimilation and synthesis of the various elements that have come in. It is perhaps because we tried to go against the trend of the country's history that we are faced with this. It is for our common good that the situation must be controlled as soon as possible. Otherwise tremendous injury will be done to both Dominions. This is why we have had meetings at Amritsar Lahore etc. Of course it is easier to come to conclusions at the conference table than to put them into effect but still it is extremely helpful that we have a more or less common policy.

The assembled Diplomats afterwards expressed their appreciation of his objective and moderate approach. Hitherto they have been without reliable guidance and this should do much to restore their confidence in the regime.

After the Diplomatic Corps had left I was called in for a talk with Nehru and Mountbatten on the subject of an alleged statement by Tara Singh which was being given currency in Pakistan. He is described as using words to the effect that "This is war. General Thimayya Area Commander is to make a report on what really happened." Nehru is not unduly disturbed but

Mountbatten stress d the peril of letting inflammatory phrases or reports of phra es in th p s e n t c i s p s u n h e k d

N hru then s d he p o p o e d to g i e a n o t h e r M a p R o m t a l k t h t i m e t o t h e P r e s and asked m for guidance on the p o n t s I t h o u g h t h h o u l d m k e I s a d t h a t h e s h o u l d s t r e s s t h c a l o f t h a d m n s t r a t i o n b u r d e n c a r r i e d b y b o t h t h e c e n t r a l a n d E a s t P u n j a b G o v e r n m e n t a n d t h t i n u r g i n g o n t h P r e s s t h e n e e d t o l o o k a t t h e p r o b l e m i n p e r s p e c t i v e h e s h o u l d h i m s e l f h e l p t h e m t o d o s o b y p r o i d i n g a s m u c h a u t h o r i t a t e d t a p o s i b l e

W h i l e w e w e r e t a l k i n g t e l e p h o n c a l l c a m e t h r o u g h f r o m L a q u a t a s k i n g h i m t o c o m e t o L a h o r f o r m e e t i n g o n t h c o n c o y p r o b l e m I t s a s s u m i n g e r i o u s p r o p o r t i o n s i n v i e w o f u n c e r t a i n t y b u t t h e S k h t t i d t o a v e r y l a r g M o s l e m c o n v e y p s i n g t h r o u g h A m r i t s a N e h r u a t f i r s t s u n l i n g t o g o t o L a h o r s a y i n g h e c o u l d s e e n u s i n t h v i s i t b u t M o u n t b a t t e n p l e a d e d t h a t h i m t h t i t w a s t a l f o r r e g u l a c o n t a c t b e t w e e n t h t w o P r i m M i n i s t e r s t o b e m a i n t a i n e d a n d d e l a r e d t h a t t h e w h o l e r e p u t a t i o n o f t h e G o v e r n m e n t w a s a t t a k i n g t h e u n c e r t a i n t y o f t h e m a j o r r e f u g e e c o n c o y N e h r u c o n v i n c e d b y t h f o c u s o f M o u n t b a t t e n a g u m t i n f i n a l l y a g r e e d t o g o a n d o n m y s u g g e s t i o n t o s a y s t h a t t h e P e s c o f f i c e

A l d y a t t h e e n d o f t h f i r s t w e e k f i s t e n c e t h e E m e r g e n c y C o m m i t t e e h a s l a u n c h e d i m m e d i a t e a d m i n i s t r a t i o n c o n t r o l s a g a i n s t t h e p r e v a l i n g c h o i c e I t h a s r e q u e s t e d c i v i l i a n t r a n s p o r t d e p t t h a t t o P a k i s t a n a n d S t a t e s r e d y t o r e c e i v e t h e m t o f i n d u n d s o f n o n M o s l e m r e f u g e e s w h o h a d c o m e t o D e l h i r a g e d f o r s p e c i a l t r a n s f e r M o s l i m s t o g o t o P a k i s t a n p r o v i d e d g u a r d c a l l e d f o r v o l u n t e e r c o n s t a b l e s a r r a n g e d f o r t h e s a v i n g a n d h a r v e s t i n g o f c r o p s f r o m d e s e r t e d l a n d g i v e n r e f e r e n c e t o t h e e r c h i n g f o r p a s s e n g e r f o r a r m s o n t a i n s a n d f o r t h s t i f f e n i n g o f p u n i s h m e n t s f o r d e l i n q u e n t m i l i t a r y a n d p o l i c e g u a r d s o f t r a n s p o r t

I t h a s a c c e l l e d a b l e h o l d i n g s i n c l u d i n g S u n d a y s h e l p e d t o k e e p g o i n g t h n e s p a p e r s a n d e l l s A l l I d R a d o a r r a n g e d f o r G o v e r n m e n t a r r a n g e m e n t s t o b e b r o u g h t t o t h e i r w o r k a n d f o r t h t e l e p h o n s y s t e m t o b e m a i n t a i n e d p r o v i d e d g u a r d f o r h o s p i t a l s a r r a n g e d f o r t h e c o l l e c t i n g a n d b u r y i n g o f c o r p e s f o u n d i n t h s t a t e f o r t h e m o e m e n t f o r t h e b r o a d a s t i n g o f d i l y o f f i c i a l b u l l e t i n s t o t h e P r i n c e s a n d f o r l a r g e c a l e c h e r a i n j e c t i o n s T h i s i s b u t a r a n d o m s e l e c t i o n s h o w i n g t h e v a r i e t y a n d s c a l e o f i t s a c t i o n

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Sat r d a y 13th S e p t e m b e r 1947*

N e h r u s P r e s s c o n f e r e n c e w a s f a l s e l y s u c c e s s f u l b u t h e s p o k e I t i t l e t a s l o n g a n d a s n o t q u i t s o e n e m i n g a s t o t h e D i p l o m a t s y e s t e r d a y I t i n c l u d e d m o s t o f t h e p o i n t s I w a n t e d f o r h i m t o m a k e b u t h e d i d n o t p u n c h t h e m h o m e q u i t e h a r d

enough and gave the impression of being—as indeed he is—a very tired man.

None the less to see Nehru at close range during this ordeal is an inspiring experience. He vindicates one's faith in the humanist and the civilised intellect. Almost alone in the turmoil of communalism with all its variations from individual intrigue to mass madness he speaks with the voice of reason and charity.

The negotiations for the transfer of power between March and August did not seem to me to evoke his full powers. A certain moodiness and outbursts of exasperation were the visible signs of overstrain but now somehow he has renewed himself and in this deeper crisis he is shown at his full stature—passionate and courageous yet objective and serene—one of the enlightened elect of our time.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### SHADOW OF JUNAGADH

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Sunday 14th September 1947*  
MOUNTBATTEN HELD A STIFF MEETING which was largely taken up with the discussion of the Lurana Qila situation. Patel is apparently on the verge of deciding to send in a battalion in order to round up Moslem arms. Mountbatten argues that any such action would be disastrous and the surest way to provoke a massacre and he is at a loss to understand how any such order could be seriously considered.

At the ten o'clock meeting of the Emergency Council Patel mentioned prolonged gunfire from some Delhi houses and pressed for action to clear up resistance pockets. General Lockhart since 15th August the Commander-in-Chief said that he could clear up the whole of Delhi in three days if he could concentrate troops on this particular job.

I had a good talk with Mountbatten and found him in his usual buoyant mood. He has been seeing British troops awaiting repatriation who told him they hate to sit around and watch all this misery powerless to do anything about it. So he suggested that NCOs and men should offer their help to organise the camps. He adds that he hopes to phrase himself as a member of the Emergency Committee in about three weeks first I will the

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Their help proved invaluable and enhanced British prestige all round.

meetings every other day and then handing over the chairman-ship to Nehru. He confessed that he is now thankful that he took everyone's advice and did not leave India on 15th August.

Ismay took back from K. R. Chelmsford. I saw him just before he went in to report to Mountbatten on his visit. He told me it was lucky he went when he did. He found Jinnah claiming to have lost all faith in the Government of India and on the point of breaking off diplomatic relations with it. Of the forty-eight hours Ismay was there he was closeted with Jinnah for no less than eleven. He was incidentally the first guest at Government House since the 15th August. He felt that he must have won the confidence of Jinnah who called him to his face a good fellow and issued him a personal invitation to come and see him whenever he wanted to.

Apparently Jinnah was full of wrath against Congress saying that he could never understand their men's hair do and was now beginning to feel that there was no alternative but to fight it out. Ismay said he grappled with him as saying that he was not given to optimism but was ready to take his life in that the Government of India were determined to put down the troubles to the best of their ability. They were sincere men and that the full faith in their efforts. I may think that he has caused Jinnah to pause on the brink of precipitate action but that his visit was only just in time.

#### GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI Monday 15th September 1947

At this morning's Staff Meeting there was a round-up on the general situation arising from Ismay's K. R. Chelmsford. Mountbatten's analysis is that the Moslem and Hindus are at least under the control of their respective Governments in approximately equal amounts but that the Sikhs are uncontrollable and even their leaders afraid of them. V. P. Menon was that there was no immediate prospect of harmony between Pakistan and India. Whereupon Mountbatten visualised the worst case as war between the two Dominions. If harmony is impossible at least we should try to keep as far away from war as possible. V. P. felt that even this hope was dissipated with Jinnah in his present frame of mind.

Mountbatten asked about Sikh matters. Was the objective to set up a Sikh State? V. P. replied no. Politically they had lost out, and had not even gained the Jalandhar. Their motive was almost entirely revenge. V. P. said it was perishing with three Sikhs who had lost their families. Their only objective was two Moslem lives for every one of their relatives. Tara Singh himself was essentially a frightened man.

The Emergency Committee meeting was a little better than yesterday's but still far too much time was taken up on small

miscellaneous items. Trivedi and the East Punjab representatives failed to arrive because of bad weather. Nehru reported on his visit to Lahore yesterday and referred to the important decision he and Lirkurt had taken to stop the hold ups due to the policy of searching refugees for arms before crossing the boundary. But no sooner was the meeting over than Lirkurt made a speech alleging that the Government of India was not carrying out arrangements agreed upon and asserting: "To day we in Pakistan are surrounded on all sides by forces which are out to destroy us."

For the past ten days we have been completely absorbed in the Punjab catclysm and the salvage of Delhi. Now a new crisis is building up from a wholly unexpected quarter. It has come to our notice that Junagadh, one of the two hundred and eighty Kathiawar States, failed to accede to either Dominion on 15th August and is now proposing to do so to Pakistan. Jinnah concurring in the act. It is fair to say that in the welter of great events immediately before and after the transfer of power Junagadh was simply overlooked and as a result is now bracketed with the two major States of Hyderabad and Kashmir as being outside Patel's full bag.

Junagadh itself is a veritable patchwork quilt. Some three thousand three hundred square miles in area with eighty two per cent of its seven hundred thousand inhabitants Hindu and its Ruler and Government Moslem, it is completely surrounded by States which have acceded to India. Inside Junagadh are islands of territory from these States and inside these States islands of Junagadh territory. Her railways, ports and telegraphs are an integral part of the Indian system. The Nawab is an eccentric of rare vintage whose preoccupation in life seems to be his pet dogs of which he owns eight hundred each with its own human attendant. On one occasion he organised a wedding for two of his dogs costing three lakhs of rupees (twenty-one thousand pounds) and a State holiday was proclaimed in honour of the event.

How has all this confusion over Junagadh come about? At Mountbatten's meeting with the Princes on 25th July the then Dewan asked a series of questions, none of which gave any sign of an intention to accede to Pakistan. Indeed he went as far as to advise Mountbatten that he proposed recommending to the Ruler to accede to India. The Junagadh Government had declared that Junagadh would make common cause with the other Kathiawar States, all of which have acceded to India. On the 10th August, however, just five days before the transfer of power, the crisis came. A group of Sindi Muslims took over the Government. Shah Nawaz Bhutto became Dewan and the Nawab a virtual prisoner in his own palace.

It has been freely recognised that the act of secession is preservative of the Prince. But India's readiness to recognise

acts was governed by a time limit of 15th August which was of course the basis of Mountbatten's urgent appeal to the Princes on 25th July. Moreover, arising from that speech two other powerful facts which have always been inherent in the choice of accessions—first in Mountbatten's own words, certain geographical compulsions which cannot be evaded and secondly the communal majorities of the Ruler's subjects.

Although Junagadh has a seaboard and a small port Veraval and thereby can claim direct access to Karachi it is clear that any final decision by the Prince to accede to Pakistan would automatically be a direct challenge to the essential validity of the whole accession policy with disastrous effects both upon the Kathiawar States and upon the Hyderabad negotiations where the Muslim extremists could be greatly encouraged. Jinnah has clearly seen the wider possibilities presented by the Junagadh error of omission. No pressure has been put by the Government of India on Junagadh to accede but when the likelihood of accession to Pakistan loomed large to formal approach we came by Delhi to Karachi for some discussion of Pakistan's intention. No reply has so far been received.

Mountbatten called me in for meetings he was having with Ismay and V.P. on the Junagadh situation. V.P. is full of anxiety and tried to persuade Mountbatten of the desirability of making a military and naval demonstration. He has prepared a paper based on the assumption that Pakistan is ready to help Junagadh with men and money.

I went round to see I may at his house in the evening and found him perturbed by the ominous atmosphere induced by Junagadh. He considered that the Information Report assessing Pakistan's likely intervention as a loan of eight crore rupees (some £2 million pound) for the development of Junagadh's port and a garrison of twenty-five thousand troops could only be regarded as childish in the light of her current resources and commitments.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Tuesday 16th September 1947*

We agreed that the Junagadh Accession has been settled and deferred to Karachi but there is not yet an official certainty. I was present at a further meeting which Mountbatten had with Ismay and V.P. I may speak with great cogency about Jinnah's probable tactics and strategy over Junagadh. Clearly on its face value the situation is worth it to him. It is impossible military liability. By no stretch of the imagination is this policy to incorporate isolated pockets of Moslems for the ever already some forty millions of them outside the Pakistan homeland.

Ismay sees the matter essentially as one of traps and traps on Jinnah's part. He hopes by luring India into a militant reaction to secure a verdict on legal points and to create a valuable

precedent for any attitude he may care to adopt towards the far greater Princely objectives of Kashmir and Hyderabad. For Junagadh is in some respects Hyderabad in miniature—a Moslem Prince and oligarchy ruling over a predominantly Hindu State in the middle of Indian territory.

I have prepared the draft communique on the Junagadh situation. The Indian case on paper is strong enough but as for possible Press reaction I have felt obliged to give this warning. Although the above arguments are cogent in themselves I doubt whether they would outweigh the damaging impression that would be created with the Foreign Press by joining issue to the point of military demonstration at this time. Any such action however justified would almost certainly be regarded as precipitate and aggressive. The Foreign Press are very much on the *qui vive* for warlike policy on the part of the two new Dominions. I urged that from the Public Relations viewpoint the immediate step should be no more than a straightforward non recognition statement the Government reserving to itself its future freedom of action but leaving open the possibility of full negotiation.

On the Punjab sector of Indo Pakistan relations Nehru has replied with commendable moderation to Liaquat's stormy utterances in Lahore. The Indian leaders he declared had sought to avert Partition but once it was decided upon the Government had tried to discharge faithfully all the obligations flowing from that decision. He spoke of derelictions of duty on both sides of the frontier which he and his colleagues condemned and were resolved to eliminate.

At the Emergency Committee to-day Mountbatten has grained his point and the Committee is now to meet every other day. There was an important discussion on the Delhi refugees. Dr Zakir Hussain chairman of the Moslem Refugees Committee gave a disquieting report on the current situation urging that the present influx of refugees into the camps must somehow be stopped. Disease was breaking out there were some fifty thousand already in the Purana Qila sixteen thousand had been moved from the Ridge to Humayun's Tomb but ten thousand more had promptly turned up there.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI Wednesday 17 September 1947

Mountbatten had his talks with both Nehru and Patel prior to the crucial Cabinet meeting this afternoon on Junagadh. He summoned all his powers of persuasion to head them off any decision which the world could interpret as putting India in the wrong or any commitment to an act of war against what was new Pakistan territory. He reiterated Liaquat's thesis that the whole manoeuvre was almost certainly a trap and part of a wider campaign which Junagadh might be expected to launch for the express purpose of presenting Pakistan to the world as the innocent weak State threatened by the ruthless aggressor. He



them to stand by the principle of a referendum both to cover the people's will and to draw any intention of meeting territory.

Mountbatten had no difficulty in carrying Nehru with him at once but it took rather longer to persuade Patel whose whole Acceptance policy as well as his personal motives were more closely affected by Jinnah's. However he too was duly convinced by Mountbatten's arguments and in particular by the impressions I myself had formed of Jinnah's mood and motives. They both went together to the Cabinet to explain their new point of view and although they must have taken their colleagues by surprise I understand they soon gained the day for a cautious approach. The decision of substance taken at the meeting that Indian and British troops of acceding States should be disposed of and Junagadh but should not occupy it and that V.P. should visit the State to explain to the Nawab and Dewan the implications of the accession to Pakistan.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI Friday 19th September 1947

Liaquat here got off the Government of India. It has been agreed under the new dispensation that distinguished Government guests should stay with the Governor General.

In the afternoon B.L. Sharma U.N. Nya and myself met Col. Maj. D. M. K. to try to look at ways and means of improving P. C. facilities and liaison with East and West Punjab. No hint was given to us that meeting that Liaquat had invited a number of Foreign representatives met him after dinner tonight in his suite at Government House. I may say that Lady Mountbatten came hat-stalled by a request for drinks for the party. Liaquat's name after dinner had asked me whether I had any clues to the case. I could give no light on the mystery until a few minutes later—B.L. Sharma rang me up in some gratification for details about Liaquat's presence.

The Mountbatten were on the point of going into dinner when the guests who included both Nehru and Liaquat. I at once pushed through a urgent message Sharma who is very worried about the meeting to be confined to Foreign Correspondents. He thinks it will be exploited by the Indian Press who will say that the Prime Minister of Pakistan has made Government House base for propaganda by inviting the Foreign Press and omitting them. I also drew attention to the difficulty involved in giving and selecting representatives of the Indian Press at the last moment and in keeping them in some way wholly off the record. In fact a delicate situation to be most embarrassing and liable to cause much misunderstanding.

ing I felt the best solution would be to invite Liaquat to call his party off on grounds of pressure of work.

This message brought the Mountbattens and Nehru straight out into the adjoining study, where with the zest of a school-boy Mountbatten said he would tackle Liaquat over dinner if and only if Nehru would agree to play his part by converting the occasion into a joint off the record session in which case he himself was prepared to take the chair. The meeting should be put back half an hour and I was to gather in a limited last minute list of Indian correspondents. Nehru I think derived almost æsthetic satisfaction from the beauty of this plan and his usually sad expression gave way to a smile and the hint of a wink. At all events he found Mountbatten's proposal irresistible as Liaquat did over dinner!

The conference itself was a tremendous success and although no word of it could be quoted it brought fresh hope and faith at a decisive moment to correspondents many of whom were seriously beginning to wonder whether any will to peace was to be found at any level with the two Dominions.

Mountbatten got the proceedings off to a good start. The two Prime Ministers he said had come together because there was much common ground between them. That is not to say that either wants to help the other Dominion for its own sake but both know that unless they come to grips with the difficulties confronting them there is danger of anarchy that will be disastrous to both.

Nehru stressed that in spite of all the developments of the past few months the main problem was economic. The other trouble will pass but this we must solve or it will solve or dis solve us. The talk of war that was going around was "completely wild and absurd. If war should come all our dreams of prosperity would collapse for a generation."

Liaquat was no less explicit. "I agree that talk of war is absurd," he said, "if war should come it would be ruinous to both India and Pakistan even more it would mean another world war. None can contemplate that with equanimity. Pakistan wants peace for all nations but especially with India. We are after all two parts of the subcontinent. We could never dream of waging war against India."

Bob Trumbull of the *New York Times* asked Nehru how the immediate psychological problem was to be solved? The first thing, Nehru replied, is to reduce fear. The first thing of emotion. Once we have done that we can get on with other things and the normal factors of life will resume operation. Nehru was asked if he was satisfied that he had complete control of his Government for the implementation of his plan and if the British were doing all they could to help?

the Prime Ministers satisfied that the other Government was doing all in its power to remedy the situation?

Nehru responded with a brief statement in London School of Economics. I am not satisfied with anything in India and have not been for thirty years. Of course I must meet the situation in every way we can partly by psychology and partly by force. If I may draw on my Socialist background what is happening now is to a large extent an upheaval in the lower middle classes—the classes that first supported Hitler. When society is perpetrating these elements to the surface. Some time these are forced to find outlet. The groups take advantage of this situation. Undoubtedly there has been a communal tendency that has happened but the trend now is away from killings and towards a dialogue. There are instances of Sikhs looting Sikh shops, Hindus looting Hindu property and Moslems looting Moslems. In a sense this is worse but not a better sign. It is a hopeful sign. It is a method of dealing with the situation and that is the way we must deal with it.

Lal Bahadur Shastri himself took issue with this. The only qualification he made was in reply to a question that they both thought these brown shirted elements were to be brought down and taken back from them. I don't agree. Lal Bahadur thought the young elements in the Moslem League have the right. Besides, we are taking steps to restore discipline in the League. That is the important point. As for the two Dominions, I would welcome foreign capital and technical aid to the task of recovery from this disaster. Nehru replied, Of course we shall welcome foreign capital and technical aid for development but not for vested interests. That is what Lal Bahadur said. Some of us.

For you were saying feeling that the two Prime Ministers had risen above prejudice and hatred and have them to be men of instruction and compatible temperament. In the last analysis they are both men who have had deep experience of Western thought and who are more effectively laid than some of their colleagues in the communal area.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Saturday 20th September 1947*

Constitutional Government is happening now repeat and more attention must be paid to the situation. The three or four countries in the world must find the preoccupations in the Punjab and Junagadh. While M. N. Khan is just arrived at Government House with the first of the Hyderabad delegation—pokesman of the Nizam, trying to stir up fear rather than to go with the Muslim League. The Hyderabadis are the enemy of the Moslem organization in the State which has been playing an increasingly powerful role in the formation of Hyderabad policy since the transfer of power—going to work to gain on the Nizam.

while he was in a recalcitrant mood in a further effort to secure Monckton's removal. Monckton was in Delhi at the time, but after he had returned to warn the Council of the perils of a breakdown and of his own intention of leaving immediately for England theitchad at the last minute seems to have been somewhat frightened by its own handiwork, and to have pleaded with him in forcible terms that if he were to leave them now it would be a disaster. Mountbatten is still hopeful that all will be well even though little more than three weeks is left of the two months extension.

At to-day's meeting, which V P attended, the delegation stressed the importance attached by the Nizam to the distinction between accession and association. Accession they felt would lead to bloodshed. They were also frightened of interference from outside. Both Mountbatten and V P gave assurances that their fears were without substance that the Indian Government had behaved correctly and that its resources were at the Ruler's disposal if required to deal with disturbances. Mountbatten warned that unless agreement could be reached by the 15th October breakdown must be envisaged which would be thought to be serious enough for India but even more so for Hyderabad. The delegation has deposited some Heads of Agreement which are designed more to keep the ball in play than to decide the match.

Monckton said afterwards that he felt there was no fundamental difference of approach between Mountbatten and himself. He would continue to look for the formula which would allow tutory independence for Hyderabad and which while containing no direct reference to the word "accession" would incorporate it on a *de facto* basis. Hyderabad he added was in no position to play the role of the fully fledged sovereign State. Provided the negotiations do not break down completely he thinks that the Nizam will press him to stay on a little longer but his decision to do so or not depends upon whether he can see a reasonable hope of achieving a compromise. If there is any such prospect he feels he ought to stay if only because peace and order in the State may largely depend on his availability. But if not it would be useless for him to remain. Both the Nizam and his Government are very volatile statesmen pursuing a very inconsistent and wavering line of policy.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### MIGRATION OF PEOPLES

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *S day 21st Septembe 1947*

THIS MORNING AT 7.15 a party of sixteen left Palam airfield by the Government Dikota to make a journey of some four hundred miles through the routes of the great refugee migrations between the East and West Punjab. The Government House party included the Mountbatten Ismay Vernon and myself. The Government guests were Nehru Patel Neogy Rajkumar Amrit Kumar General Lockhart H.M. Patel and Shaukar Aslam. As we approached the River we had our first aerial view of the Sikh and Hindu population. We were looking down on one of the greatest migrations of population in recorded history and then only on the migration of the

Hindus Sikhs and Muslims have been now in response to the migration gathered up their worldly goods and moved away but the religious was usually limited to the community and the was always the expectation that the wand would ultimately come back to their homeland. To-day however the thousands of the numbers in the movement are probably greater than before and this time there will be no return.

We took the first great caravan route between Ferozepur and Balloki Head and passed it for across the Ravi. We flew in fact for over fifty miles against the stream of refugees with the changing of the river. Every now and then the density of bullock carts and families foot keeping to the thin lifeline of the road would tail away only to fill out again in a new column without end.

At Balloki Head the actual boundary the refugees waiting to cross the bridge overflowed and took on the appearance of a squatter township. Here they had been brought to a standstill but the general movement was very slow and we could men on horseback keep passing up and down who seemed to be giving some hint of not mind to the closely packed mass. At the road some families were flanked by the cattle in many cases their only worldly goods but few of any would be able to pass the livestock across the bridge. Already the flow of human traffic across it was beyond any conceivable capacity for which it had been built.

As we flew back into India we came down low over the northernmost of the Moslem refugee colonies making its slow and

painful way along the main Lyallpur Lahore road. Their exodus brought them across the Beas River and involved an elaborate detour to save them from passing through Amritsar. We estimated that it took us just over a quarter of an hour to fly from one end to the other of this particular column at a flying speed of about a hundred and eighty miles per hour. This column therefore must have been at least forty five miles long.

At the conference on Sunday Nehru and Liaquat had told us how, to begin with they had set their faces against any whole sale transfer of populations but how events had rapidly become too large for them and had dictated the course of their policy.

To-day we saw for ourselves something of the stupendous scale of the Punjab upheaval. Even our brief bird's-eye view must have revealed nearly half a million refugees on the roads. At one point during our flight Sikh and Moslem refugees were moving almost side by side in opposite directions. There was no sign of clash. As though impelled by some deeper instinct they pushed forward obsessed only with the objective beyond the boundary.

**GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI Monday 22nd September 1947**

At this morning's Emergency Committee Cabinet Ministers took a rather firmer and more urgent view than hitherto of the need to defend refugee trains. In the past few hours reports have come in of no fewer than four serious attacks on refugee trains: two on Moslems in Jullundur and at the Beas bridge and two on non Moslems in the Lahore area. There was anxious discussion on the measures needed to tackle these bestial outrages.

During his visit Liaquat had referred to one train starting off with two thousand passengers of whom only seven hundred had arrived at the other end and of another completely lacking in any water supplies for a three-day journey. As in all these train horror stories there is the usual factual confusion and difficulty in securing reliable data. In the meanwhile rumours run hundreds.

One encouraging factor is that both the Governments of the United Provinces and East Punjab are showing strength in their resolve to tackle the disorders. Collective fines on villages which are known to be involved in these attacks are being imposed and levied within twenty four hours. Should night trains be abandoned? In the effort to provide protection for passengers at night a whole Army contingent was involved. During one of the incidents several officers and sixty four men had been engaged in a desperate hand to hand struggle.

As the date continued Mountbatten raised the wider issues—the need for establishing the proper priorities between the

general maintenance of law and order and the immediate of relief. He then further asked what was to be done after the fugitive movement was over. More troubles might easily flow from failure to tackle these questions with the utmost urgency and on an all-India basis. We must know now what the plans for them are and planning must start now. What is being done not only for the day but for the next week and far beyond. Where will they go? Will it be an orderly settlement? Will it be dominated by black market corrupts and squeeze? This raised one of the gravest administrative problems in history. In a few days the head of the great fifty million column would have crossed the border. They were leaving the rich, lonely district of the Punjab. They were not going to a Promised Land. Their new home was a peril only in that it provided physical safety.

Mr. Jinnah said that the first two phases of the refugee problem—where to move them on arrival and how to feed them for the next six months—were the most difficult. The longer-term plan, though he felt, was relatively easier. What arrangements had to be made had been made for getting in the next harvest? Neogy said that many refugees had been attracted by the standing crops and were preading out to gather them. Some fifty thousand had already done so. He added that he was drawing up a scheme for collecting farming. But Mountbatten warned there was at least ten hundred thousand of these in the country we saw yesterday and admitted that finding a permanent settlement for them. Patel remarked that there was three months food in the East Punjab but that the distribution of it was the real problem.

During this prolonged discussion, Ismay whispered to me that all this really should be discussed in the Cabinet Committee under the Prime Minister's chairmanship but I must say that I am inclined to think that it is the needs of Mountbatten's presence to provide the sense of urgency and establish the correct priorities.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI, Tuesday, 23rd September, 1947

To-day's biggest development has been Jinnah's appeal to the Commonwealth to enter into Pakistan despite the Indian Hindu's apparently untenable mode and the temerarious reply. As with all Jinnah's major policy decisions, it would seem to be carefully timed and to coincide significantly with reports that have been reaching me from Foreign correspondents of a upsurge of anti-British feeling. I comment on Pakistan. The newspaper attacks on British officers in the Indian lines as in India assert that the present trouble remains only due to a British-Bengali alliance and criticism of Mountbatten himself who is alleged to be disgruntled in the hanging ahead of the double Government. General H.P. It is noted that these themes are not discouraged in high places and that the format of

public opinion on such matters is in the hands of very few. I get the impression that with his approach to the Commonwealth which can only be a source of embarrassment in all the Dominion capitals Jinnah may well be over playing his hand. India however is in danger of doing just the same thing over Junagadh. The Jam Sahib of Nawanganar has just indulged in a bellicose Press conference calling for coats off and no non resistance etc

The Amritsar situation is still very grave. Cholera has broken out and the train attacks continue. Yesterday's decision to cancel all trains passing by Amritsar has been discussed to-day at the highest level and Nehru after consultations with Mountbatten has confirmed that the decision is still in force. Telephonic communication with Amritsar is very difficult but I succeeded on behalf of the Associated Press of India who had been completely baffled in their attempts to get through in securing from their local correspondent the text of a joint Peace Appeal from the two Sikh leaders Tara Singh and Oodham Singh. Without Government House priorities the Appeal might have been indefinitely delayed but high importance was placed both by Mountbatten and Government circles on its rapid publication. The tone of their language had in keeping with their patriarchal appearance much more of an Old than New Testament ring about it. After boldly denouncing shameful attacks upon women and children they added fiercely. We do not desire friendship of the Moslems and we may never befriend them. We may have to fight again but we shall fight a clean fight man killing man.

What effect this crude appeal will have on their followers it is difficult for anyone who has not made a close study of Sikh psychology to say. Both are undoubtedly big men in the complicated hierarchy of Sikh religious politics. The trouble is that the situation is at other moments of supreme crisis in Sikh history seems to have passed out of control of the leaders. Billy Short explained to me how the essence of the teaching of Guru Nanak the founder of Sikhism was. Where five of you are gathered together there am I. The Sikh tradition accordingly is one of cell formation and spontaneous local leadership. Here is the source at once of Sikh strength and weakness. In the higher reaches of command the prevailing atmosphere is one of indiscipline and intrigue and Short considers that authority is passing from the older leaders such as Tara Oodham and Giani Kartar Singh to a number of younger men chiefly ex Indian National Army officers.

The Sikh leaders are at great pains to describe the Hindus as their brothers but there are not many outward signs of brotherly love and Tara Singh has been almost equally in his dissatisfaction with the East as with the West Government. If Partition has meant immense economic



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GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI W dn sd y 24th S ptember 1947

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Jinnah to issue statements paying tributes to their work. Jinnah replied frankly that he considered the reference he made in his speech at the banquet in Karachi on 13th August was sufficient.

The problem has now become acute as a result of a statement to-day made by the influential Liberal leader Pandit Kunzru who is reported as saying that had British officers acted impartially the situation would probably have been brought under control in the East Punjab. He also alleged that a British officer had been responsible for not preventing a large number of casualties in the Sheikhupura massacre at the end of August. Mountbatten rang Nehru at once about these grave allegations pointing out that the statement as reported was both untrue and libellous and that unless it was immediately refuted the position of British officers in the Indian Army would become unbearable. Nehru promised to make an early statement. Whereupon Gandhi intervened to suggest that perhaps a better way would be for Kunzru himself to make a public retraction. Ismay however is not satisfied with this solution which in his view meets the demand of Indian but not of British opinion and he has persuaded Nehru to issue a statement based on reliable evidence which categorically denies that the culprit at Sheikhupura was of British nationality. The whole incident shows that goodwill is still a delicate plant but one which Nehru is always ready to nourish.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Friday 26th September 1947*

Unwittingly Gandhi seems to have added to the general tension for during his Prayer Meeting this evening he made passing reference to the possibility of war with Pakistan in an address otherwise wholly devoted to his worship of God as truth and non violence but the phrase in question. If Pakistan persistently refuses to see its proved error and continues to minimise it the Indian Government would have to go to war against it has touched a raw nerve and undoubtedly aroused intense and almost scared speculation among the Press and will almost certainly find its way into the world's headlines tomorrow.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Saturday 27th September 1947*

Mountbatten received a letter the other day from a Mr. Hardi pointing out the difficulties listeners to the All India Radio were experiencing in hearing the programmes and recordings of Mahatma Gandhi's words at his Prayer Meetings. This has led Mountbatten who feels that these daily messages with the exception of yesterday's on which he immediately tackled Gandhi are one of the great factors for the creation of confidence and unity to raise the matter with Gandhi personally and to instruct me to follow it up in more detail. T

I have had a revealing and I think valuable talk with Gandhi at Brl House this afternoon.

As I came into the room he was busy writing a note and did not look up. When he did so he coughed rather heavily. So — this how I get it. I had been told during the morning that the interview would have to be postponed. But he now explained that the message that I should not come had been sent without his authority and that he had decided as he was not well that he would not talk to me. He said that Mountbatten had not actually discussed with him the possibility of his making a statement but had merely handed over the letter from Mr. Karda at the end of the letter telling me suggesting that I should explain the position to him.

I began by pointing out that the broadcast reception of his Prayer Meetings is by means of a factory. The great listening and eagerness of awaiting his dance were not always the same. Every morning he said. Often not more than a word in fact came through. A number of special problems were involved in maintaining the audibility of the broadcast. There was the strange case of the meeting itself. No doubt it was necessary at times for the Mahatma to turn his head away from the microphone. I did not do this because as every loved him very fast. I pointed out that although this was a tremendously powerful medium for doing it with them as and when a few of the world led headfully pointed out. I considered that it would greatly help in propagating the opinion of him would be persuaded to make a statement broadcast. All India Radio.

Gandhi's initial reaction against the idea. To make a set phrase as a statement would be so much that I did to myself though I gave a decision whether it consists of five lakhs. I explained that it was not a very far from to go to a statement and that the broadcast could be made just as well where he was. In general form of a dialogue with his friends. He returned to his objection that the speech would have to be prepared in advance. This was contrary to his method of speaking spontaneously what was in his mind.

I replied that although a statement with a time limit was the simplest reference to talks in his case. The tremendous authority the deep impact on would be conveyed if he spoke simply for a long time. He said he had felt in passing All India Radio which he understood was one of the most up to date ever by European standard but he had never been inside. He summed up that I had in mind only one special broadcast. I replied that I had not proposed to suggest more but if he would be prevailed upon to speak periodically I was sure that the impact on opinion would be even greater. I have never really given full consideration to talking of the

wireless he said I would like two or three days to ponder over the arguments you have put forward. There are many hurdles to jump before I can make up my mind but I think you have jumped over the first of them.

He then turned to wider themes. He said that what worried him most was that the trouble here in Delhi and the Punjab seemed to be deeper. He was unwilling to admit that his and Suhrawardy's influence had been decisive in Calcutta and would not in fact feel confident about his own influence unless he achieved a measure of success here. He described in detail how he and Suhrawardy had started on their joint enterprise in Calcutta. Suhrawardy had shown great courage and endurance. His appearance in Gandhi's Ashram was a dramatic departure from the comfortable mode of life to which he was accustomed. By pledging himself on behalf of the Moslem minority he had willingly accepted both discomfort and danger.

I suggested that the difference perhaps between Calcutta and Delhi was that he had been present in Calcutta to grip the crisis at the outset whereas he had only arrived here when the troubles were in full flood. He said that this was not wholly true. There had already been quite a long sequence of disturbances before he and Suhrawardy set to work. The fact was that somehow the atmosphere in Calcutta was favourable to his influence but here at present it was not. He spoke of the angry man who had asked him the day before how it was that if he really was a Mahatma and a miracle worker he could not put matters right.

I dealt with him yesterday as you no doubt saw. Gandhi said he was profoundly anxious about the communal situation. Unless checked the climax could only be that no Moslem could regard himself as safe living in India and no Sikh or Hindu in Pakistan.

During the latter part of our talk Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and the famous Miraben (Miss Slide) came in and a young girl throughout took a full note of the conversation. Of his Calcutta adventure—one of the most dramatic achievements of his life—he had spoken with real zest. Clearly the incongruity of his association with Suhrawardy had appealed to his ever present sense of humour. His eyes sparkled as he described the details of their joint business. One does not come away with the impression of a very old man in his dotage or even anecdotal age but of one who lives with the intensity of youth and retains the boyish sense of fun which tragedy and the passing of time cannot wither.

CONFERENCES HOUSE NEW DELHI Sunday 29th September 1947

Through at my talk with Gandhi yesterday he showed himself to be wholly unperturbed by the stir which his Prayer Meeting reference to war had produced. Speaking again last night he

I have had a revealing and I think valuable talk with Gandhiji at Birla House this afternoon.

As I came into the room he was busy writing and did not look up. When he did so he sighed rather heavily. So — this is how I meet you. I had been told during the morning that the interview would have to be postponed. But he now explained that the message that I should not come had been sent without his authority and that he had altered his mind. It is all that he could not tell me. He said that Mountbatten had not fully discussed with him the possibility of his making a radio broadcast but had merely handed over the letter from Mr. Karda to the end of their last talk suggesting that I should explain the position to him.

I began by pointing out that the broadcast reception of his Prayer Meetings by no means satisfactory. The great listening audience eagerly awaiting his guidance is not always heard very much of what he said. Often not more than one word in five came through. A number of special problems were involved in maintaining the audibility of outside broadcasts. There is the extraneous noise of the meeting itself. No doubt it was necessary at times for the Mountbatten team his head away from the microphone. I did not do that but was very loudly heard. I pointed out that although I was a tremendous lip-flicker and mumbled, it did not affect the message. I concluded that it would greatly help in satisfying public opinion if he could be persuaded upon to make a radio broadcast. All I did was to say.

Gandhiji did not react as against the device. To make a statement in this manner for a theatrical I need to express my feelings. He asked me whether it consisted of five or five lines. I explained that it was necessary for him to go to a stage and that the broadcast would be made just well when he was signing in the form of a dialogue with his friends. He returned to his objection that the speech would have to be prepared in advance. That is contrary to his method of speaking spontaneously but is in his mind.

I pointed out that although a script with a time limit, the normal procedure for radio talk is to have a script with a time limit. I pointed out that the script would be composed if he spoke extempore for a long while. He said he had often prepared All India Radio which he understood was one of the most important even by the rope stand but he had never been said. He summed up that I had in mind only a special broadcast. I replied that I had intended to suggest it but if he could be persuaded upon to participate periodically I was sure that the impact on the nation would be very great. I have never really given full consideration to talking over the

The first move was V P's visit to the State ten days ago which produced only limited results. He met the Dewan who told him that the Nawab was indisposed and therefore could not see him. However the Sheikh of the small State of Mangrol which up to the transfer of power had been under the suzerainty of Junagadh used the occasion of V P's presence in the neighbourhood to get away from his own State and voluntarily to accede to India thus following Babariawad which had already acceded. But the Sheikh on his return to Mangrol which coincided with V P's to Delhi found himself obliged to renounce his accession. On the 22nd the Government of India decided that the circumstances in which the letter of renunciation was written were such as to justify them ignoring it. Junagadh followed up this bloodless victory over Mangrol by sending troops into Babariawad.

These developments were near enough to a checkmate to infuriate Patel who considers that an act of war has already been committed by Junagadh in sending troops to Babariawad and that India should take all the necessary steps to oust them. Indeed unless there is a show of strength and readiness in the last resort to use it he is ready to resign. Just as Kashmir is close to Nehru's heart so Junagadh is part of Patel's homeland. It is easy to dismiss this as mere provincialism but it is necessary always to remind oneself that the concept of India as a nation is by European standard of geography and population considerably larger than life.

Mountbatten wrote to Nehru yesterday making the distinction between the planning of and preparation for military operations and their actual execution stressing that a direct conflict between the two Dominions would not only undermine their moral reputation but also put their physical survival in deadly peril. This advice is acceptable from Mountbatten. Unfortunately the three Chiefs of Staff who are all British in their appreciation of the Junagadh situation have quite independently underlined the Governor General's estimate of the danger to a point where they have clearly overstepped the boundary between military and political advice. Thus further fuel has been added to Patel's indignation.

To avoid any further confusion of this nature while at the same time to minimise the general risk of false decision and precipitate action by the Government Mountbatten has recommended the establishment of a Defence Committee of the Cabinet. Within this context he has in mind ancillary committees such as the Chiefs of Staff Committee Joint Intelligence and Joint Planning Committees but he has at the same time propounded one vital modification of the British practice in which the Chief of the Imperial General Staff is wholly divorced from Command. He has insisted that India would adopt a procedure whereby from each of the three S. the

same officer should double the role of Commander in Chief and Chief of Staff. Nehru and Patel approved this decision and Ismay has been asked to draft a paper elaborating its organisation in time for tomorrow's Cabinet.

As for Jagdish Mountbatten has urged an immediate course which allows for military reinforcement to continue but only on undisputed territory around the State. He has also asked that Liaquat should be advised of the scope and nature of all impending troop movements to Kathawar. Finally he wants a clear public statement that India will accept the verdict of the people will in all States where there is no dispute.

He said some background to the mounting Translations from central to provincial spheres of democracy will have been behind his plea that No paper plans work out. He says the verdict of the Commission for at least five weeks (five hundred thousand) will be needed to write and to prepare the problem whether the proposed accommodation should have priority over the use of illegal holdings and homes. Building resources do not allow for proceeding at full throttle with both. He wants the new East Punjab capital to be designed to hold a million people. He agrees that the hold should be from the Mountbatten's angry and that what ever is decided should be frozen and no fresh holdings allowed there as it could become speculative ground.

Triennial treaty of the canal along the Indo-Pakistan border. The standard agreement by which they have been trading since 15th August is not working. Shot have been fired now. Who is responsible? Surely not the Pakistan Army? General L. Khatri said the Pakistan Army as undoubtedly in state of alert and expecting armed action from the East Punjab. The evidence that the Indians are expecting a general attack from the West. Some would say that must be restful. The proposal is that there should be a two-weekly meeting with Mountbatten, the West Punjab Governor, the two Prime Ministers and the Army Commander.

The situation was discussed. The double centre is now between Ludhiana and Amritsar and there have been serious border incidents along the main line of the route. Some of the Sikh Princes are adding to the difficulties. K. Porthala pushed a column of refugees from his State to the main column without the East Punjab Government and there are heavy casualties from starvation while there has been a similar ruthless removal of Muslims from Ferozepur.

At lunch today I tried to tell us that Sikhs and Muslims pursue each other on the road and show fraternal unity in criticising the Government. I sat next to Mr. Theparan. The East Punjab Government official who has been making a close study of the whole casualty position. It is of course notorious that

refugees principal victims of atrocities, make very unreliable eye-witnesses. Whenever it has been possible to check the facts the assessment of casualties by eye witnesses has proved to be inflated more than a hundred fold.

In Mr Thapar's considered view it is most unlikely, that the total casualties of killed and wounded will turn out to be more than one per cent of the total population in the area of disturbance.

The troubles which had in fact started in Rawalpindi and Mooltan in March 1947 causing major migrations and continuing thereafter came to a head with the transfer of power. Lahore was reported as out of control with one per cent of the town on fire by 14th August by the 15th the same per cent was reported to be in flames. The storm then passed to Amritsar.

Under prevailing conditions Simla was wholly impracticable as the administrative centre. In spite of the lack of physical facilities he decided to move to Jullundur because the situation could be more easily controlled from there.

The first policy concept was to try to stop mass evacuation. His own tour between the 15th and 27th August had been devoted to that end. By the 28th he had the feeling that the situation was in hand. Then followed the massacre of Sheikhupura in the West Punjab. There were varying estimates of the casualties there. Mudie put them at three hundred but the Army situation report gave the minimum figure as between seven hundred and eight hundred. There was a violent reaction in Amritsar. With this Trivedi said the realisation came to him that a major transfer of population was inevitable. From that day to this he has been trying to carry this policy through and to keep his Ministers up to the mark.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI Tuesday 30th September 1947

A meeting has duly taken place of the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Ministers of Defence and Finance and the Minister without Portfolio. It described itself as a Provisional Defence Committee and then approved its own permanent composition and functions receiving full Cabinet approval later in the day. The three Service Commanders in Chief who are now automatically Chiefs of Staff of their own Services as well are to attend all its meetings. Mountbatten has been invited to take the chair in a personal capacity in view of his knowledge and experience of high military matters.

Whatever the risks of misrepresentation across the border this development is a notable victory for moderation and sane counsel. The Defence Committee instrument and Mountbatten's guidance freely issued and informally given cannot fail to serve as a restraining influence at a time of great stress when passions are clouding judgment and the price of experience is high.



For the past three weeks the Emergency Committee of the Cabinet serving as the chosen instrument for immediate high level decision has directed all the agencies of this new-born and stricken Government. It has been a tactical respite and not a wholly centrist method but the heart of India has continued to beat. The situation after a high peak in Delhi, the East Punjab and Northern India is slowly but surely beginning toebb. Every morning we have anxiously watched the flags in the Map Room to see if the reported tension in the United Provinces in such cities as Lucknow and Cawnpore would burst out into a fresh orgy of killing but the firm action of the Provisional Government buttressed by support of the Cato has somewhat held the movement of refugees leaving the Punjab United Provinces under. There has for us been a wider dispensation—the having present the first destructive force—drought and famine by all the laws of probability held have exacted the penalty by the deaths of millions of providence have so far passed without doing so. As far as human effort is concerned special credit is due to the people for health and food services on both sides of the border. A prodigious number of cholera injections vaccinations and the incult has been carried out. India has in large supplies of cholera vaccine to Pakistan. The work of mercy and healing fine out in the communal darkness.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### REPORT FROM LONDON

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Wednesday 1st October 1947*  
WE ARE LEAVING for London two days time. In the meanwhile I am trying to gather in as much background information as possible to ensure that I am fully briefed on the latest facts and opinion there.

This morning I had a most interesting talk with P. Telser, private secretary to Shreeji at Auangzeb Road. We began by discussing P. Telser's problems. In spite of the modesty and security of the weeks Government House meeting with the Foreign Press it is clear that the Sardar and his circle are still full of resentment at British Press treatment of the Punjab trouble. He went so far as to ask me whether there were still the thanks Congress leaders were to get for the considerable political risk they had taken in accepting Dominion Status at all? I told Shankar that

I thought history would record to the Sardar great credit for his part in the transfer of power and that his realistic attitude on the three major issues Partition Dominion Status and relations with the Indian Princes was statesmanship of a high order.

I came away with the firm impression that the Sardar was well aware of the solid and immediate advantages Dominion Status conferred on India. In the wider context of the world conflict he clearly appreciates that if it comes to a show-down India's interests are likely to be closely interwoven with those of the Western Powers. This being so Dominion Status or its equivalent enables India to come within the orbit of Western good will without incurring the formal liabilities of a treaty relationship. It must be stressed that Patel has never actually intervened in external affairs and that this field is Nehru's unchallenged responsibility. Moreover the prevailing view point of Nehru places higher hopes on India's capacity to stand outside the struggle of rival World Powers and in the process to build up a neutral bloc in Asia which could play a constructive mediating role through U.N.O. and by other means.

Shankar said that the Sardar had met with great success yesterday at Amritsar. He had made a big speech to what was perhaps the most representative gathering of Sikh leaders since the transfer of power. Nearly all the Jathidars had been present and had responded favourably to his call for moderation.

Liaquat is back in Delhi for to-day's Joint Defence Council. I understand that this morning's meeting was a very difficult one. At the small lunch party afterwards at which Nehru and Liaquat were the two guests and Vernon and myself were the staff members the atmosphere was still somewhat strained. Liaquat who was in a pea green coat and looked far from well, got involved in an argument with Nehru over the movement of Moslems from Ambala. It was one of those occasions when we would all have liked to change the subject but seemed powerless to do so.

The background to all this tense talk is the action of the

Mountbatten and Nehru underlined the clear right of both with the lapse of Paramountcy to decide India. Nehru called on Liaquat to order the withdrawal of Junagadh troops from Babaria and Jstah was sending this a telegram. He ended in saying that Junagadh troops had no entry in Mangrol as well. Nehru undertook not to allow Indians to enter either State until the legal position of both had been definitely established by high authority. He said that Junagadh forces were immediately withdrawn.

Liaquat attituded in this as reasonably conciliatory but on the whole self-protection. Putting Junagadh's case in the first place he was adamant that they had been given no ground so. He takes his stand on the legal grounds that the ruler has the right to go with reference to the moral or ethnic aspects of accession.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Thursday 2 October 1947*

A few days ago the *Daily Telegraph* published a sensational report that the fact that Auchinleck's going home meant a visit to Karachi had stated. Referring to this could be peaceably resumed in both directions if the Sikhs of the Punjab and the Sikh State could be effectively disarmed. Not a national ally. Patel greatly disturbed by the story and he discussed its implications at some length with Mountbatten. I drew to his attention some correspondence Mountbatten suggested that Patel agreed that I should take the opportunity to. A check properly a check on the story's authenticity and if possible secure his agreement to a disclaimer.

I went and told the Supreme Command how this felt. In the meantime I was quiet and did not do. The terms and conditions of the past work have indissolubly linked Goan with Him. With the new order but the tide of events has flowed past this residence of the C-in-C India so that the new work is by the members of former greatness. Auchinleck glanced quickly through the report and then planned his usual measured but in a manner that he had no recollection what sort of saying the words to but did to him either to Mr Jinnah with whom he had prolonged confidential discussions about the future of the Supreme Command or to anyone else least of all the *Daily Telegraph* correspondent to whom he had not met and did not know. After a few parting remarks on the subject of Press relations also he invited me over a cup of tea in the garden to drink a disclaimer with him. This took only a few minutes to compose and within the hour I was able to report Mission completed.

Auchinleck's position as Supreme Command has become gradually more difficult. His expected prestige and integrity have been very valuable assets in keeping the partition of the Indian clear of the great political dispute from which

has sprung but already there are signs that the Supreme Command is being subjected to just the same kind of pressures which made the already baffling task of the Punjab Boundary Force finally impossible.

Keeping in mind the tension engendered by the Punjab it is greatly to the credit of Auchinleck and his staff that they have been able to make such headway without so far attracting major controversy. From the formation of the South-east Asia Command in the autumn of 1943 onwards I have watched Auchinleck play the role of self-denial. Now he is called upon to preside over the most painful task of all—the partition along communal lines of an Army the glory of which under British command had been its capacity to embrace the loyalties of all Indian races and religions in a common service.

KARACHI Friday 3rd October 1947

Yesterday was Gandhi's seventy-eighth birthday. For the first time the Court Circular on Mountbatten's instructions has referred to him as Mahatma Gandhi. Hitherto it has always been the formal and largely meaningless "Mr". The actual occasion of this change is the reference to Lady Mountbatten's birthday visit to him yesterday at Birla House. I have written a note to Ian Stephens Editor of *The Statesman* who has for so long been pleading for this particular courtesy.

On touching down at Karachi Ismay was at once driven off to stay the night with Jinnah the rest of us being billeted at the airfield. Accommodation is desperately short but for all that, Karachi is beginning to assume the cosmopolitan atmosphere of a capital city. A growing Diplomatic Corps throngs the Palace Hotel where this evening I was given one of the best dinners I have had in all Asia.

AIRDORF KARACHI HABIBIYA Saturday 4th October 1947

Apparently Jinnah was in an angry and difficult mood. He is utterly convinced that the Indian leaders' real aim is to strangle Pakistan at birth that Gandhi has never accepted Partition and under the guise of religious teaching is all the time spreading Hindu poison and that Nehru, in spite of the appearance of moderation is not really master in his own house. For Jinnah Patel is the real dictator who he alleges has entered into an unholy alliance with the Hindu Mahasabha and will be ready to overthrow the Congress if it led to some sort of compromise in favour of his anti-Muslim designs. In the East Jinnah, living in almost total isolation from the outside world is a far from happy man. He is trying to exert his fears by nourishing his hatreds.

LONDON *S t d y 11th Octob 1947*

I h t day sent off my first personal p gress report to Mountbatten b g nning ith congratulations t h m on the birth f h first g nd d to the baby on st ting lfe in the best M untbatten style by t tie t n to pun t lity!

I ha e h d l n h [l ntn d] wth Clement Davies who descr b the p lical settlement of 15th August a miraculou ache em nt wh h h d nanced our prestig throughout th w ld and as n no ff t by s b q ent de lopments n the Punj b In h s e b th the Ru n and Amer can ca g in t o r mpe l m Ind we o for a er dest yed and no am u t f p cial ple d ng f om either quarter ld re inst te t The p e t d tu bances nly b ght h m the full extent of our p t ch ev m nt b t Churchill I told you so line as eprehens bl nd in ny s f l c i o s We ould nly hav stayed aga n t w ld and Br t ll op n on mor o er the com m nal expl on o ld in t bly h e ngulfed us f w had tred to stay

LONDON *S t d y 18th Octobe 1947*

In just nd f r ight I h h d n all om fifty nterve two full l Press co f n —on t I d a H th the Ind n o r pondent Lo don a d the other wth Fanc Will ms in the ch to the Lobby C e pondents n the H use f Comm — bort t lk wth S St fford Cripps nd tw m t ng e ch wth Noel B k nd Patrk G d n W lk r the ne Secretary nd Und r Secretary f Stat f r Comm n ealth Rel t

Cripps ll p w and prest ge n the G m t enh ced by the cent Cabinet re bufle h s become coord n tor n h ef f the nat ons e t econom c eff rt h m s n b ng to pull th n ntry back from th p e p c o confronting t du ing the n vert b lty i n the summe N one talking to Cripps can fal to be mp essed by h s lucid ty f mind a d s re ty f m n r If he mewn t d dactic t s because he n a pos tion t b None the le s t s p ss bl to appreciate that th s el m nt of cert t d n h s make up wh l f se ic to him in re ch g decisions f h gh p lcy may well have b en s uce of we kne d r g h s momento n gotations wth the Ind n l ders in 1942 d 1946 I ntellect ould have scaled the problem h succes w ld h ve been assu ed

Noel B k and Gordon W lk r are clearly determ ned to br ng fesh ideas t this nev Departm nt which is a somewhat uneasy amalg mation f the old Ind a and Dom ons Offices Both sta t from scr tch as far s India is concerned but that sh uld not b a d sadvant g in the r case for Noel Baker s spec l knowledge of internat nal relations and Gordon Walker s f h story g ve them the right background

LONDON Wednesday 22nd October 1947

I have sent off my final progress report to Mountbatten before we leave for Delhi on Saturday

Fleet Street [I wrote] finds genuine difficulty in adjusting itself to the transition of Congress from an anti British movement into a Dominion Government and there is a tendency to assume that Pakistan will inevitably have closer connection with Britain than India. On the other hand there is considerable suspicion of Jinnah's aims and motives. Nehru's stock is rising and he is most highly thought of in Government circles. Patel is still almost completely unknown.

In the interviews I have had with Cripps Noel Baker and Gordon Walker I was questioned about the High Commission's organisation both generally and from the Press viewpoint. I gave it as my personal opinion that its scope was inevitably restricted by your special status and influence but that with your departure it would become one of the most important missions in the world. The objective should be to try to maintain through the High Commission the good personal relationships that you have been able to establish with the Indian leaders. Cripps said that if action was to be taken on this it would need to be done fairly quickly and he hoped you would put forward your own views on this important matter when you return to London for the Royal Wedding.

Noel Baker wondered whether India was giving consideration to the possibility of a new capital city. He realised that for the present Delhi had all the administrative facilities but from what he had seen and read it would seem to be physically and politically vulnerable and too far removed from the heart of the Indian Dominion. Discussing Partition he argued that from the viewpoint of international relations there was a *prima facie* case to be made out for it. A Central Government covering 500 hundred and ten million people was too large a unit for effective action or treatment through international agencies and it was by means of such agencies incidentally that he believed British help and influence both in India and elsewhere might be most effectively brought to bear.

between over-emphasis on the sister Dominion's theme and the appearance of neutral indifference to their problems.

I was asked more than once about the prospect of Dominion Status and in the bias of my talk with Shankar I said that I had the impression that the matter was still being weighed in the balance. I was also asked about the position of Patel. After stressing his important rôle in Congress's three great decisions over Partition, Dominion Status and the Accession of the Princes I said I felt that as the effective controller of the Congress Party his first loyalty was likely to be to that Party and to its future. It was obviously in some danger of breaking up as it could no longer be held together solely by the anti-British appeal. He had airily laughingly predicted himself of the Princes's alternative sue and he must be under some pressure to substitute the Moslems if only to avoid being trumped by the Mahabha and the Rashtriya Swyam Svk Sangh (RSSS). Congress suggested that the relationship of Nehru and Patel was a normal one as between the statesmanlike and the party second command.

Finally Noel Baker inquired about your intention as a director of your book. I was asked to try on I said that I could not be sure that you would easily ever publish a deliberately intended review in the spring but that there was no doubt the Indian Government had not decided as yet but were not yet decided helping the matter for as long as possible.

LONDON *Th* day 23 d Octob r 1947

Ismay asked me to invite John Bevan the London Editor of the *M* *h* *s* *t* *G* *r* *a* *d* *a* *n* to see him on the subject of a contravention of the article published nearly a fortnight ago entitled *Retrospect*. It was the most sweeping attack in the whole of Montbatten's policy that I have seen in a newspaper of this calibre. The article spoke of the haste with which the withdrawal was carried out and the loss of opportunity. The British departure turned out to be a run. It was alleged that no effective machinery for joint action between the successor Government of India and Pakistan was set up following the Partition. No compromise of 3rd June. Why was no offer made to settle the Punjab Boundary Force with British troops? In fact it seems to have been staked on the gamble that if Partition was carried through at breakneck speed the turbulent and malignant would be too much out of breath to stir and the gamble would lead.

Ismay was eloquent from a distance in his answers to each point of criticism certainly succeeded in exposing the limitations of the *ex post facto* arguments and assertions. He explained that the amount of advance planning—and there had been plenty—could have wholly provided against the force of the Punjab explosion and

the particular form it took. He recalled the Punjabi saying: If one counts up to eleven one does not strike the man—but the people were simply not prepared to do just that. Civilised peoples tended to cling to false concepts in their attitude to acts of savagery. He recalled Winston Churchill's definition of fanaticism as applied to the 1880 war against the Mahdi. Fanaticism wrote Churchill is not in itself a cause of war but is some thing that can be exploited when war has begun. It is the outcome of oppression by the strong of the weak.

So when the *Manchester Guardian* complained of lack of foresight in setting up administrative machinery, it had to be remembered that not everything could be solved by Chiefs of Staff papers. Improvisation was necessary and the Chiefs of Staff themselves had to be ready to deal with just such emergencies as they arose. With for instance Dunkirk, we had no idea where we would reach the sea. We might have gone back along our lines of communication.

India in March 1947, he said, was a ship on fire in mid-ocean with ammunition in the hold. By then it was a question of putting the fire out before it actually reached the ammunition. There was in fact no option before us but to do what we did. He would be frank and say that he had just spent the unhappiest six months in a long official life, so he hoped he would not be accused of false complacency in saying that if he had had the time over again he would have given the same advice.

KARACHI—NEW DELHI Monday 27th October 1947

We left Northolt on Saturday in a Lancaster, as the Governor-General's York was unserviceable and in process of a complete overhaul to be ready in time for the Mountbatten's return for the Royal Wedding.

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

## KASHMIR IMBROGLIO



Events Mountbatten said he had taken a serious turn and three hundred and thirty men of the First Sikh Battalion were flown in to block the main road on by North West Frontier tribesmen which was making badly on Sir George's the summer capital. He was very nervous that I should begin making my Press contact early in the morning but realised that it was essential that I should fit the account fully with the latest facts of the crisis which came to a head while we were on our journey from London. I saw clearly that the only way in September there had been a hitch in the newly established relations between Kashmir and Pakistan — that the Kashmir Government could give Pakistan no failure to provide supplies of essential commodities and putting about a number of small border raids and Pakistan making counter-complaints.

Three days before the transfer of power and the Accession time limit the Kashmir Government had decided in intention of signing the draft agreement with both India and Pakistan. Subsequently the Indian Government policy has been to refrain from inducing Kashmir to accede. Indeed the States Ministry under P. L. Datta in the past has always taken the position which would be interpreted as favouring the hands and the game as that is so to Pakistan would not be taken amiss by India. The Maharaja's character and nature has mounted a big factor in the present crisis. Almost any action taken quickly would have been decided from the time the British position in the world but in combating major threats would be met as with the Nazis this is the only weapon in his diplomatic armoury.

The military and political implications of today's morning and Mountbatten is of course under an illusion about this. Although his role can only now be the last resort be advised very largely the firm impression that he is becoming very already heavily loaded. His Government is overburdened and distracted with the problems of the Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir from the most dangerous pitfalls. It is a sudden emergency calling at once for reflection and quick decision. Mountbatten's extraordinary versatility can now be well adapted to the demands of the hour.

I gather from him that it was last Friday night (24th October) that he flew in honour of the same evening that Nehru first spoke of bad news and reported that the tribesmen were being taken in military transport up the Rawalpindi road. State forces it seems are absent and he gathered a most critical situation was developing. Mountbatten attended the Defence Committee on Saturday 25th at which General Lockhart read out a telegram from the Headquarters of the Pakistan Army stating that some five thousand tribesmen had attacked and captured Muzaffarabad and Domel and that considerable tribal reinforcements



GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Wednesday 29th October 1947*

Mountbatten went to see Nehru in his room this morning. Patel joined them and there was a frank talk but the general desirability of the L. H. C. v. M. Union was asked about going himself also saying he had no feelings of personal pride when the question of saving the two countries from disaster was at stake. Patel replied that he and the rest of the C. B. net were strongly opposed to either of them making the S. M. Union then pointed out that the L. H. C. was a loathsome and anther meeting of the Joint Defence Council was in any case due to be held this week. It would be a daily gesture for Nehru and himself to go to Lahore for that purpose. Nehru agreed and Mountbatten returned to Government House where he had once made a telephone call to Jinnah who expressed pleasure at this proposal. Five minutes afterwards Douglas Campbell rang me to ask whether there was any truth in the rumour that Mountbatten had been pecking Jinnah on the telephone.

Mountbatten had a very intimate talk with Gandhi today. At yesterday's Prayer Meeting the Mahatma stuck an Imam's Churchliana on to a Koran. He said that the cult was in the hands of Godman but do not let him. He would not let a false U. O. of C. be used to let the Spiritans brahmins find the Thiruvallur no mind Shikhs. Abdullah and his Moslem friends and Shikhs came to get the report in the defence of him. This would be a good example to the rest of India's children and defence would affect the whole of the continent. Every one should forget that Hindus, Muslims and Shikhs were very enemies.

The immediate military situation is serious. The Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion flown in on Monday has been killed and the 2nd has been withdrawn and fairly heavy fighting is going on for and a half miles west of Srinagar.

It is noteworthy that the Government in Hyderabad has cited a reply to the Kashmiri Government. Only twenty-four hours after the Indian acceptance of Kashmir's accession and the fly in comes the report of a dramatic hold up of the Nazim's legation by the Hindu population of its departure for Delhi to sign a Standstill Agreement. We are still awaiting the full details of this extraordinary development but it is clear that the Nazim in his efforts to cling to his prerogatives is allowing himself to come increasingly under the influence of the Ittehad tremors.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Thursday 30th October 1947*

Pete Rees kindly called in to see me for dinner to keep me posted with news. The situation in Kashmir he said was very obscure and there was no proper intelligence. He was convinced that if the tribesmen had followed their own looting instincts they

would have been in Simlra by now but under the leadership of ex I N A officers they seemed fortunately to be more cautious.

After a difficult Defence Committee Nehru's attendance at the Joint Defence Council in Lahore was formally confirmed and announced but he has since had to send a message to Mountbatten that the doctor had decided that he is still not well enough and so after all Mountbatten will go alone. Nehru is also greatly distressed by a Pakistan Government statement issued with a sense of timing which seems to be Jinnah's stock in trade technique of applying diplomatic pressure. It is in fact a method which makes diplomacy almost impossible. In the statement the Kashmir accession is described as being based on fraud and violence and as such cannot be recognised. There was it added conclusive evidence that Kashmiri troops were used first to attack Moslems in the State and even to attack Moslem villages in Pakistan near the border. All this had provoked the Pathan raiders—and so on in terms which make it probably as well that Mountbatten cannot take Nehru with him.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI Sunday 2nd November 1947

Since the troubles began I have been cut off from my family. I took the chance of a lightning visit by Peter Howes to Simlra to see them for a few hours. We left on the return trip to Delhi first thing this morning.

All was quiet save for signs of recent communal troubles at Karnal. We saw lorries bringing out Moslems from the walled township. Moslem women were cowering against the wall. As we rushed past the car radio was thundering out Bach's Prelude and Fugue in F minor. The incongruity of sound and scene and circumstance stirred thoughts in me which went deeper than words. What are the bounds of human experience? It was as if by one strange apocalyptic flash all the grandeur and misery of the world had been revealed.

On our arrival at Government House I found I was due to dine with the Mountbattens. The Maharaja of Bikaner was among the guests. After dinner Bikaner gave a running commentary on a film describing his State's part in the movement and welfare of refugees. By means of some fine colour photography the film told the story of how more than five lakhs of refugees had been phased through Bikaner. They passed in their thousands over largely barren land imposing almost overnight an immense strain on the State's resources and limited lines of communication. Yet throughout the whole operation only one hundred and fifty Moslems died on the way.

Mountbatten who was in good heart told me he was very pleased with his three and a half hour talk with Jinnah at Lahore. They were able to exchange views with rather more freedom.

than if their respective Prime Ministers had actually been with them. Jinnah began by complaining that the Indian Government had failed to give timely warning to his Government of its intention. Mountbatten replied that Nehru's first act, after leaving the meeting at which the decision to fly in the troops was taken, was to telegraph to Liaquat. Jinnah then reiterated the published statement that the accession was not bona fide since it rested on violence and fraud and would thus never be accepted by Pakistan.

The argument then got into a vicious circle. Mountbatten agreed that the accession had indeed been brought about by violence, but the violence came from the tribes for whom Pakistan and not India was responsible. To this Jinnah would retort that in his opinion it was India which had committed the violence by sending in the troops and Mountbatten would continue to stand his ground that while the tribesmen were where the violence lay. Thus it went on until Liaquat could no longer conceal his anger at what he called Mountbatten's obtuseness.

Mountbatten addressed Jinnah with strength of the Indian forces in Srinagar and of their likely build-up in the next few days. He told him that his consideration of the prospect of the tribesmen entering Srinagar in any force was now remote. This led Jinnah to make his first general proposal which was that both sides should withdraw to cease a simultaneously. When Mountbatten asked him to explain how the tribesmen could be induced to remove themselves his reply was, 'If you do this I will call the whole thing off, which at least suggests that the public propaganda in that the tribal invasion was wholly beyond Pakistan's control will not be pressed to far in private discussion.'

On inquiry Mountbatten found that Jinnah's attitude to a plebiscite as conditioned by his belief that the combination of Indian troops in occupation and Sheikh Abdullah in power meant that the average Muslim would be far too frightened to vote for Pakistan. Mountbatten proposed a plebiscite under United Nations Organisation auspices whereupon Jinnah asserted that only the two Governments General could organise it. Mountbatten at once rejected this suggestion stressing that while Jinnah's prerogative might be his own constitutional position allowed him only to act on his Government's advice.

Jinnah's mood was one of depression, almost fatalism. He kept harping on the masochistic theme that India was out to destroy the nation of his making and his attitude to every personality and act of policy across the border was coloured by that general assumption. Mountbatten with Ismay who was present for most of the conversation did his utmost to reassure him. It is doubtful whether he made any headway but at least they left good friends on the surface. Mountbatten says that as a military operation the speed of the flying on 27th October left

our SEAC efforts standing. It certainly seems to have left Jinnah standing as well and to have been a performance wholly outside his calculations.

In spite of Mountbatten's optimism and frankness the events of the past few days have inevitably caused a widening of the breach between himself and Jinnah which this latest meeting has by no means narrowed. For Jinnah would seem to have judged Mountbatten by himself and assumed that he retains almost Viceregal powers. This might well lead him to the further assumption that Mountbatten was the real author of the letter accepting Kashmir's accession, the directing hand responsible for the daring and dash of the fly in and in general the moving spirit in causing this serious setback to Pakistan's interests and aspirations.

If this is so it is a tragic misreading of the facts. Ever since the acceptance of the 3rd June Plan Mountbatten has regarded as the central feature of his mission the promotion of good will between the two successor States. Jinnah is not insensitive to issues of personal reputation and it is strange that he cannot see that disappointment here would be likely to be regarded by Mountbatten as a measure of personal failure.

Apart from his vexation over Kashmir it may well be that Jinnah does not consider that on wider grounds Mountbatten now enjoys the powers to serve as a restraining or mediating influence in India. As we have seen Jinnah's concept of the proper functions of a Governor General were made plain enough when he at once invoked the special powers allowed under the Independence Act.

Last but not least although the two men have a considerable personal respect for each other Jinnah is now wholly dedicated to the aims of his statecraft.\* Deeper fears and colder calculations which are beyond Mountbatten's means to penetrate seem to possess Jinnah at this time.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Monday 3rd November 1947*

With the Kashmir crisis holding all the limelight Hyderabad has escaped attention yet only yesterday—some two and a half months after Independence Day—Mountbatten found himself re

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\* Just how deep was this regard of Mr Jinnah for Lord Mountbatten was revealed to me recently by a personal friend of Mr Jinnah's. He told me that just before his death Mr Jinnah went so far as to say: 'The only man I have ever been impressed with in all my life was Lord Mountbatten. When I met him for the first time I felt he had *nur* ( *nur* approximates in English to a divine radiance )'. He said that Mr Jinnah added that he had never doubted Lord Mountbatten's integrity the whole time he was in India.

ceiving an entirely new Hyderabad delegation of the led by M N N W Z Jung one of the strong men of the Ittehad and it would seem several stages further way from settlement than on the 15th August. Indeed the developments which most significantly met the height after Kashmir accession and the fly in the ointment which can only be described as a Ruritania map probability is remarkable that the negotiations should be continuing at all. But for Mountbatten's and Monckton's persistence and willpower they would have broken down completely by now. As it is the Nizam has succeeded only in completely forfeiting whatever reserve of confidence the Government of India—ind Patel in particular—had in him and I doubt whether the relationship can be the same again.

During Ismay's and my visit to London Mountbatten used his personal influence as a conciliator to find the formula that would close the gap between a common and association. He even went further to commit himself to a document—handwritten on vellum scroll perhaps—stating a head given to some such character. Known all men by the presents. It would then be accepted by both parties as an instrument without further prefix but mounting the entire the Srd and as cat in the His Exalted Highness!

In the belief that the Nizam was susceptible to moderate influences only long Mountbatten was at his side. Mountbatten worked hard to cure agreement for itself from V P Menon's the State's the great would be continued. Hyderabad. The day before V P as did the—all the necessary clearances being secured to both the ends—the Nizam turned the state down on the grounds that the V P presence would give rise to demonstrations. The refusal and of P's reply to the effect sufficiently offensive to the susceptible of both parties that he brought the negotiations to a final halt.

At the stage Mountbatten asked Monckton to meet to De his personal guest and Monckton appeared on the 10th October a year after the Standstill Agreement which would give India more of the substantial advantages of a new while preserving the Nizam's symbol. Thus Mountbatten succeeded in securing an extension beyond the time limit for conducting the discussions in this case. The following week some tension developed regarding the complete collapse of the negotiations seemed imminent but on the 2nd October a draft Standstill Agreement was prepared with various revisions which was acceptable both to V P and to the Nizam's delegation.

The delegation at once returned to Hyderabad to clinch the matter and on the same evening showed the draft to the Nizam who did not like the look of it and decided to refer the whole matter to his Executive Council. The Executive Council with the

delegation present to explain points of detail spent the next three days in discussing the draft and on Saturday the 25th October with a formal vote of six in favour and three against advised the Nizam to accept and sign the Standstill Agreement without further revision or delay. The delegation duly reported the result of the vote that evening to the Nizam who indicated his approval of the decision. The Nizam it seems spent most of the next day preparing two collateral letters which involved an undertaking on his part not to recede to Pakistan and covered his position in the event of India leaving the Commonwealth or war breaking out between India and Pakistan. During the evening the delegation called for all the documents as they were due to leave for Delhi early the next morning. But the Nizam without explanation excused himself from adding his signature that night.

At three o'clock in the morning a crowd estimated at about twenty thousand swarmed round the three adjacent houses occupied by Chhatari Monckton and Sir Sultan Ahmed. There were loud speakers in the crowd telling them to remain orderly and to create no disturbance beyond preventing the delegation from leaving. No Hyderabad police were seen at any time and the Ittehad publicly took credit for this militant challenge. At about five o'clock in the morning Chhatari ultimately managed to make contact with the Army authorities and the delegates and Lady Monckton were then safely evacuated to the house of an officer of the Hyderabad State Forces.

At 8 a.m. the Nizam sent a message to the delegates that they should not leave for a few days. He also advised Mountbatten by telegram that owing to unforeseen circumstances they could not return forthwith and trusted that the Governor General would not mind if they came on Thursday or Friday at the latest. Mountbatten at once agreed. When the Nizam actually saw the delegation in the afternoon of the 27th he said he wanted them to stay while he took final stock of the situation but he expressed complete agreement with his Council's decision. He roundly denounced the Ittehad and Razvi who it seems was personally responsible for organising the opposition and asserted that he would force Razvi to accept the decision.

The next morning at a second interview with the delegation the Nizam called Razvi in but far from converting him it was Razvi who dominated the Nizam spoke of the agreement as meaning the death of Hyderabad and pleaded for a chance to reopen negotiations in what he regarded as more favourable circumstances arising from the Indian Government's preoccupations with troubles elsewhere. He proposed a new delegation ably of three dissenting voters in the Executive Council. Chhatari and Ahmed all explained that any such



city would be illusory and disastrous and thereupon tendered their resignations.

On Thursday the 30th the Nizam had a last interview with Monckton and Ahmed before the former left for London and the latter for Delhi. Ahmed who at once reported the whole of the above Nizam's episode to Mountbatten fired a parting shot at his former master by saying in effect "This will be the end of you and your monarchy."

At the same time a telegram from the Nizam advised Mountbatten that owing to the changed political situation the old delegation had been dissolved and a new one created from the ranks of the dissenting voters within the Council. Moin Nawaz Jung the new chairman is also a brother-in-law of Mr. Laik Ali who has succeeded Chhatras Premrao who up to September represented the Peshawar United Nations.

The possibility that all this manoeuvring may be the prelude to some attempt by Hyderabad to align herself with Pakistan cannot be overlooked and was very frankly dealt with by Mountbatten at his Lahoremeting with Jinnah. There has been general contact between Karachi and Hyderabad both before and after the transfer of power but Jinnah is at pains to stress that he has had nothing whatever to do with the Nizam's reversed decision and has not discussed any formal agreement with him.

Mountbatten's valuations by talking a line that the Nizam and Hyderabad to be an independent sovereign State in close association with the Dominion of India with a foreign policy in general conformity with India's. But Mountbatten has been extremely tough with him and his delegation which he met for the first time yesterday. He told them that he had never in the course of his experience in international negotiations of some years ago attended to and that ordinary procedure as Hyderabad was over trying to get adopted by referring to draft which had already five days of patient examination been rejected by the other party. He has made it clear beyond all question that the Government still abide by the final offer on the 14th Standard Agreement. And when the previous delegation left Delhi as accepted by the Nizam Council and until the sudden volte-face by the Nizam himself. If the Nizam could not do up to his own decision on the responsibility for bringing off the negotiation would be his alone and the Indian Government would make it clear to the world that this was

Nehru himself broadcast off to the United Nations contrived publicity for Kashmir. The Mountbatten raised with Jinnah on Saturday. It is thought that he made it clear at the time. But Jinnah's objection which he made quite clear at the Lahore meeting is not to the desirability of a plebiscite as such but to the presence of Indian troops in Kashmir while

is being held which he claims likely to prejudice any chance of it being impartial. Both Nehru and Patel seemed to think that a referendum could not be held during the winter months and would in any case take time to organise. Mountbatten is concerned about the complacent assumptions in much of the thinking about Kashmir and has pressed for a military appreciation of just what a long term commitment over a wide front would mean.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Thursday 6th November 1947*

I called round to see Alan Moorehead at the Imperial this morning. David Astor the editor of *The Observer* asked him to undertake a series of special feature articles on India and Pakistan since Independence. This is his first visit to India and already the vast canvas excites his imagination. Even a short conversation shows him to be a most gifted impressionist with a particular forte for descriptive analysis.

What I asked is your first reaction to India? It is rather like Spain, he replied—men sit hating each other like the wrath of God—then because the sun is too hot shrug their shoulders and say what is the use? He thought the phrase India's pathetic contentment was the complete reverse of the truth. On the contrary he felt their mood was one of apathetic discontent.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Saturday 8th November 1947*

The Joint Defence Council met this morning after prolonged and vain efforts by Mountbatten to secure the presence of Liaquat and Jinnah. The Pakistan representatives were Nishtar the Communications Minister and Mohammed Ali who as Secretary General to the Government is already one of the most influential figures in the new regime. Mountbatten invited Nehru and V P to join Nishtar and Mohammed Ali at lunch. Afterwards he steered the conversation into two separate rooms. Nehru and Nishtar talking politically and V P and Mohammed Ali considering the problem at the official level.

For the first time the technique of broadcast invective and controversy has been temporarily set aside and a serious effort has been made to seek a detailed working formula for a settlement of the dispute. There was a rather larger area of common ground than had been expected but diametrically opposed views were held about the withdrawal of forces. Pakistan wanted the withdrawal to be simultaneous by both sides while India was adamant that withdrawal could be effected only after Kashmir had been cleared of the raiders. To encourage the Indians they are negotiating from increasing strength comes the fact that the offensive ordered on Tuesday has succeeded.

Ba amula has been recaptured. Altogether the Mountbattens can leave for London tomorrow with easier minds about Kashmir than had seemed possible forty-eight hours ago.

On the other hand the Junagadh princelings were vexed. At last Monday's Defence Committee it was reported as little more than routine item that Indian forces had duly entered Mughol and Babar and on the 1st November and that the occupation had been carried through peacefully. It was reasonable to hope that Patel would be satisfied for a decision on the occupation of Junagadh itself to leave the pending treaty and greater problems were safely resolved.

But today at about one in the morning the Dewan formally invited the Indian Government to take over the administration of Junagadh in order to save the State from complete breakdown pending an honourable settlement of the serious issues involved in Junagadh's accession. The Dewan advised Liaquat Khan, as acting with the support of public opinion and authority of the State Council and of the Nawab himself who had submitted before flight to Karachi. The Government at once accepted the request authorising the Regional Commissioner in Rajkot to implement it.

All these developments were only brought to Mountbatten's notice the next morning. It was the first time since the transfer of power that the Government had carried out major act of policy without fully consulting or notifying him and hence of the event. He felt this may be due to Pils and VPS decided to spare him embarrassment.

Finally to complete the day's news the Nizam, who was leaving on the 1st reserves of good will towards himself in Delhi seeks to buy yet more time before signing the Standstill Agreement. His delegation which left Delhi yesterday has been brought by dint of four days' suit and effort to the point where it was ready to advise the Nizam to accept the Standstill Agreement without modification. The Nizam, in the strength of Mountbatten's forthrighting London visit has now asked for postponement until the 24th November. Mountbatten after consultation with the Government has replied agreeing to this proposal and a settlement reached by the end of the month.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI Sunday 9th November 1947

We set out very early for Pakistan to see the Mountbatten family in the first leg of their flight to London. Right up to the last moment Mountbatten was far from happy about going at all but went apart from Princess Elizabeth being his cousin the bridegroom Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten not only his nephew but his made his home with him in England for the past eighteen years.

At 10 a.m. I attended the Swearing In of Rajagopalachari who in Mountbatten's absence will be acting as Governor General. Since the transfer of power this famous elder statesman of the Congress Party has been serving with distinction as Governor of West Bengal. The ceremony took place in the Council Chamber in the presence of the Cabinet. C. R. as he is generally called dressed in his white *dhoti* and smiling benignly through his large dark glasses gave the Hindu salutation. Everyone stood while Bannerjee the Secretary of the Home Department read out the words of the Royal Commission—To our trusty and well beloved Chakravarti Rajagopalachari greeting. The Chief Justice Kania administered the oath to which only one alteration was made the substitution of the words affirm for swear.

The ceremony was all over within five minutes but this was quite long enough to convey the full sense of its historic significance. There were both fulfilment and dramatic irony in the spectacle of this Congress campaigner becoming the first Indian to act as head of State by means of the form and title of the Raj which it had been his life work to supersede.

I attended the acting Governor General's first lunch party which he gave to members of his staff. C. R.'s married daughter Srimati Namagiri who is shy and retiring is acting as hostess. The A.D.C.s laid on the normal procedure for outside guests our staff party being lined up for individual introduction. The ladies all curtsied but C. R. pleaded 'Don't do that for me!'

After the lunch he called for Vernon and myself. We expected little more than a few formal pleasantries but our talk was far more prolonged and illuminating than that. We emerged from this encounter strongly impressed that when the time came here was the ideal successor to Mountbatten. There could of course be no greater contrast between the two men's minds and outlook. Mountbatten—dynamic extrovert tackling events at the surface with feverish activity. C. R.—introspective essentially a scholar and thinker anxious primarily about the underlying causes.

He asked about the scope of my work and then proceeded to analyse the role of the Indian Press which he said had a long way to go before it could achieve its full freedom. I asked him what influence it had on politics and he said 'Very little. The Congress had completely dominated the political scene and the Press instead of providing informed criticism was nothing more than a body of political propagandists. If there were to be a change in the balance of power all the Press would do would be to follow suit and one lot of propagandists would succeed another. He said he had just written to an old friend of his in Madras who was a critic of the Government saying that the essential,

nothing. His hesitation followed by the inability or unwillingness of Pakistan to prevent tribal incursions into the State has undoubtedly been the primary cause of the present crisis. It is probable that nothing short of a full-scale tribal invasion to the gate of his capital would have induced the hesitating Maharaja to accede at all.

I am convinced that the Government of India were bound by right to accept his Accession before offering to give him military aid and to regard it unilaterally as a final measure until the destiny of the State is finally decided by a constitutional plebiscite. It should be stressed that this accession has complete legal validity both in terms of the British Government's and Junagadh's pre-emptory policy statements. But just how narrow the escape has been for Mr. Mountbatten's sterling services to be seen from Junagadh's dramatic invasion, rendered imminent on the 27th October to his Command-in-Chief General G. G. Gracey and cancelled solely as a result of Gracey's engagement to referee the matter to Auchinleck. Auchinleck's immediate intervention caused Junagadh to pause, still long enough for second thoughts. Only thus were the two Dominions saved from being forced to choose between a state of open warfare each other.

The Nizam of Hyderabad undoubtedly playing for time to see how K. M. Veloo develops before taking a final decision in favour of the Standstill Agreement. If the attempt he has made on what can only be described as a Russian negotiating basis. The Ittehad which he originally envisaged has now become a stable F. N. Keneston and the whole is now turning on whether the Nizam has the political and military strength to resist the opposition to any form of agreement with India. If the Hyderabad problem can be laid to rest confident that we shall be able to surmount the impasse of the crisis.

At his meeting with Mountbatten in Lahore on 1st November Junagadh asked him to believe that he had at first been against accepting the accession of Junagadh and had murmured for some time, but eventually finally to the instant appeal of the Nizam and Dewan. But this is not the line taken in the earlier Delhi by Liaquat Ali Khan and those of any such misgivings. It is whatever the most satisfactory explanation by accepting Junagadh's accession in the first place. In his words, it is a vital reaction.

Patel has responded to the challenge in a way which I think raises domestic morale. He has calculated that even over world opinion. But although the Government's action in occupying the State will provide material for the supposition and likelihood to summon a legal case with recent European history it can still be claimed that there has strictly been no violation of law. It is perhaps worth noting that the invitation from the Junagadh Premier to administer the territory in the ruler's absence does not in the Indian Government's view prejudice the Accession issue.

Nehru has offered early discussion of the whole problem but Pakistan demands what it calls the restoration of the Nawab's administration before such discussions can begin. India points out that it was the Nawab's administration and nobody else who decided to call in their troops. All this however leads into a labyrinth of detail and a web of propaganda and it is important not to get lost in the one or entangled in the other.

Taking the larger view of developments to date Kashmir, Hyderabad and Junagadh are essentially one situation and react on each other. A move towards agreement in any one of these three States would ease the situation in the other two. Accession has been amply vindicated. All the acceding States have held firm and in the three cases where there has been trouble the Ruler has each time been of a different community from the overwhelming majority of his subjects. If the Accession policy had not been duly sponsored and pressed home by Mountbatten and Patel there would undoubtedly have been complete chaos. As it is the scale of the consolidation is indeed impressive. In so far as the Princely States before the transfer of power formed no part of British India their accession now means the incorporation into the Indian Union of larger territories and populations than have been lost to it by the creation of Pakistan.

Mr Churchill's recent speeches in Parliament during the Debate on the Address on Burmese Independence and on the Punjab troubles have aroused old phobias. In two respects I feel that what he said should not be allowed to pass unchallenged. First although we are admittedly wallowing here in a statistical morass all the data available to us suggest that his round figures of the number of people who have lost their lives in the recent disturbances are an inflated estimate. Secondly the implication of his speech on Burma that Dominion Status is something less than Independence should surely be taken up at once by the British Government as being false in political fact and legal theory and in any case completely contrary to its declared policy.

My own impression which has been confirmed since my return is that the Government of India will not force the pace on withdrawal from the Commonwealth and if they can find a suitable excuse for letting the matter remain in the pending tray they will do so. I have for some time felt that one of the major objectives of Jinnah's policy has been to keep this issue at the boil and if possible to tease India out of the Commonwealth leaving Pakistan as the Northern Ireland of the sub continent. Mountbatten as a cousin of the King by his continued presence in Delhi as Governor General of India inadvertently makes it difficult for Jinnah to promote this concept.

Be that as it may evidence is accumulating that Mountbatten is to be made the target of a fairly heavy propaganda from Karachi. The first salvo was an article in the

*T*m s to day a cu ing him of being in active command of the Kashmir operat ns His turn t London for the M yal Wedd ing sh uld be the b st ref tat on of this fantastic charge But the depress ng traum remans—the bolder th l the ider the credence f om which it oft n follows that to deny an untruth is simply to spread a susp cion

## CHAPTER TWENTY

### PROGRESS AND RELAPSE

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *T esday 11th N emb 1947*  
 TO-DAY IS THE g eat Hindu elebrat on f Deepa v li A w th our Ch tmas the emphas s pl ced on the family and part cularly on the h ldren All the h use ar bedecked th l nt ns f r t the fest al f th lghts C R called me in th m rning saying he had c mpo d sh rt De p l g eeting wh h h thought mght pp pr tely be h f st m sage s Go ern r Gene l The me age ddre ed t th peopl of Id h d pecul r rhythm b u ty f r lke N hrn C R is a mast r f E gl h pr e

We may t he r te li e the m nd to und lge in festive r jo ng when m ar rro nd d by d fl ltes and deeply imme s d n n x t a t day b t De p wal is a gre t nat al day a s ted w th hope a d j y from t m immemorial m Ind a Th lght th t re lghted o th t day al o rep es nt the hope for m re nd m m nghtenment nd the holy a ount ng d no n the m r f the f t al a s t d th the le s ing of the sp t ymbol cally all d the Ga ga Shan May th Deepawali r t puify th l t nd nghten the m nd f p pl ev ry he n Ind r spect e f cate r re d r s call d ace

OBSERVATORY HOUSE : GOVERNOR-GENERAL B LOOF SI ILA

*Wedn sd y 6th No n b 1947*

On all s des the e s gn f d te te v ng m to the hope that the storms h ch h e thr atened to o e w l m the s b c tinent f llow ng th tr n fer of power m y at l t b s b d ng All Ind Rad o pr ded pe h ps the m st pr m ng cries of news items t be he d in a y n e nng s n e th t a fer of pow r Frst there is the Stand till Agr ment w th Hydera bad Mountbatten n his return from London has—as Patel

announced in the Legislative Assembly yesterday—seen the Hyderabad delegation for the first time and precisely the same Agreement is being taken back for the Nizam's signature as a month ago

Secondly Nehru has made an important statement on Kashmir which while it once more accuses Pakistan of conniving at invasion indirectly repudiates the recent dangerous suggestion of Sheikh Abdullah that there might now be no need for a referendum. If Nehru had not done this promptly Mountbatten's own position would have been very difficult. Nehru has simply repeated the terms on which Accession had been accepted—that is an Interim Government followed by reference to the popular will under an impartial tribunal. He rejects the doctrine of a simultaneous withdrawal of troops as providing in itself mere confirmation of Pakistan's connivance.

The third item of good news is a Joint Defence Council meeting with Liaquat coming to Delhi to-morrow for it. This will be the first personal encounter between the two Prime Ministers since the Kashmir invasion.

Finally from Karachi comes the official announcement of the intention to disband the All India Muslim League and to confine the operations of the League to Pakistan. This is an enlightened decision which will help to free many of the forty million Moslems living in India from a difficult double allegiance. As such it is a powerful and timely contribution to peace in the sub-continent.

#### OBSERVATORY HOUSE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S LODGE SIMLA Saturday 29th November 1947

The Nizam has signed at last and Patel has made a good statement paying tribute to Mountbatten for his decisive role in the negotiations. Certainly patience has been called for in dealing with the old Nizam who adheres stubbornly to the methods of traditional oriental diplomacy. Wholly divorced from the developments of the outside world he seems incapable of taking any decision until he has enmeshed himself in the webs of his own intrigues.

It has been a niggling operation until the last. When the delegation had their final meeting with Mountbatten on Tuesday they began pleading for very minor amendments such as the substitution of will for shall and finally even a semi colon for a comma in a desperate effort to justify their existence and make good the assertion that the Government of India had agreed to changes in the text approved by their predecessors. It was for this reason that Mountbatten was at pains to stress that he would not agree to the change of even a comma. Some small amendments in the collateral letter were accepted but here India



firm in refusing to allow Hyderabad to have its own diplomatic representation.

The Ittehad and its next most leader, K. Asim Razvi—who was accidentally killed during the last bout of negotiations—can claim no more than that the Standstill Agreement has been brought about by a purely Hyderabad digression. But the face-saving device has been effected only at the expense of P. T. I. confidence.

The Nizam declares his intentions. For all that the Standstill Agreement allows a breathing space of a year for heads to cool and hearts to settle.

OBSERVATORY HOUSE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S LODGE SIMLA  
Monday 11 December 1947

The London Press is beginning to comment on the content of an *Indo-Pakistan deal*. First fruit of the Standstill Agreement: the Hyderabad Nizam decides on to release the local Congress political prisoners. Most of the key men, including Swami Ramanand Tirth, the President of the State Congress, have been under arrest during the negotiations.

OBSERVATORY HOUSE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S LODGE SIMLA  
Saturday 6th December 1947

Nehru has made a major statement on Foreign Policy to the Legislative Assembly. This is the field in which his mind is spread thick and I suspect that he gets the deepest satisfaction from being the Foreign Minister of a big Government. He is making determined bids to keep India out of the scramble of power politics. He hotly denies that his aim is neutrality but it is broad effect will be something like that. He calls for co-operation with both the United States of America and Russia and makes no reference to the United Nations or the Commonwealth by denying that he hopes to keep India's relations with the Commonwealth members which will seem to imply a link attachment. So the A.S.

In a reference to the denials by the United Nations over the partition of Palestine Nehru commended the Indian proposal for two autonomous States within federalism. This has asserted itself in United Nations circles with the partition which has already led to so much trouble and would lead to more. India he added would gain in prestige by taking an independent line this way on major issues of world policy. He made the point that politically Foreign Policy depends on economic trends: then a country's interests and policies were not yet fixed but had been determined by the pressing needs of the immediate internal crisis.

At the same time Asaf Ali Nehru's first Ambassador to the United States bids in Washington for American aid in the urging that India was solvent and a good market. As for Indo Pakistan relations he replied he expected they would be close—at any rate at the economic level

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI Thursday 11th December 1947

I have been acquainting myself fully from the records and from a long talk I have had with Mountbatten on the past and often dramatic developments in the Kashmir situation of the past fortnight during which time there seems to have been almost a year of diplomatic effort. Mountbatten has brought with what I can only describe as heroic zeal to close this long and prevent the whole sub continent falling apart from a massive manic obsession over the political future of a single Indian State important enough in itself but containing only four million out of its four hundred million inhabitants.

One of Ismay's most important contributions to peace was the part he played both early in November and during the "cordial" talks between Liaquat and Nehru in Delhi only last week. It was again Mountbatten had great difficulty in bringing the leaders together as yet again Liaquat prefaced the meeting with a telegram designed to infuriate Nehru to whom it was this time directly addressed. He has once more described Abdullah as a quisling has accused the Indian Government of attempting to eliminate the whole Moslem population of the State and repudiated his demand for setting up an impartial independent administration immediately.

Nehru fortunately is not the man to let his justifiable indignation degenerate into false pride and Mountbatten duly reminded on the two Prime Ministers to have their first man-to-man talk on Kashmir since its accession. After a long preliminary presentation of his case by Nehru Liaquat who was obviously tired and weak after his recent illness managed to ask a number of pertinent questions and to put forward proposals which Nehru promised to consider. Ismay with his own outstanding skill and experience in the drafting of high level formulae and with the support of V P and Mohammed Ali on behalf of the two Governments at once put these proposals into more formal shape and they provided the basis for four further meetings during the next two days.

Briefly the proposals were that Pakistan should use all her influence to persuade the rebel Azad Kashmir forces to cease fighting and the tribesmen and other invaders to withdraw from Kashmir territory as quickly as possible and to prevent incursions. India should withdraw the bulk of her forces leaving only small detachments of minimum strength to maintain order and prevent disturbances. The United Nations Organ

to send a commission to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir and to recommend to India, Pakistan and Kashmir before it was held steps which should be taken to ensure that it was fair and unfettered. Certain steps which were intended to take towards this object such as the release of political prisoners and the return of refugees should be published shortly.

With Ismay's help the position reached at the end of the talks was that while there was no definite agreement Nehru's criticisms were confined to detail. Liaquat for his part who came to Delhi insisting on the complete withdrawal by both sides and impartial administration before a plebiscite and an impartial plebiscite only fully gained the lot and partially gained the first of the conditions. He thus showed himself ready to make concessions of principle. Ismay left quite sure that the formula was a both a political and administrative grounds a workable solution and the only one that has so far been propounded. The atmosphere when Ismay left was promising. It seemed that the foundations had been well and truly laid but concluded on a heart-breaking work.

Two days ago and only two hours after Mohammad Ali who had stayed in a bungalow near the Mountbatten residence stated that he had credited me as one of the most depressing things that has ever been heard of in the press. For the first time Pteel and Baldev Singh appeared before the Defence Committee in a mood of woe. They had just returned from the front and the reports they brought back together with independent information reaching Nehru had ended the Cabinet. He might just agree to the immediate plebiscite or even for the present to continue negotiations. The grievance was threefold. First reports of the general contraction of Indian tribesmen in the West Punjab; secondly the illegal action that Liaquat had no sooner left Delhi than he had done all in his power to encourage violence and that the British had done nothing and perhaps more emotionally disturbing continuing forces of ghastly atrocities and the wholesale murder of non-Muslims and the selling of Kashmir girls.

Contact was immediately made with Mountbatten planning a discussion with Liaquat that he should telegraph Nehru confirming the desire for a complete negotiation. Liaquat did this urging that the only way for bloodshed to be stopped was for the representatives of the two Governments to continue to meet together. Nehru at once responded to the spirit of this message and accompanied Mountbatten to Lahore for last Monday's Joint Defence Council.

The discussion on Kashmir ended with a break for dinner party from three to five afternoon until midnight—seven hours in all. This meeting took place in a generally friendly atmosphere with only occasional outbursts. None the less it convinced



Maulvi Azad is a great scholar and a man of retiring disposition. In his during the past ten years he is a central figure of the movement. As the leading Moslem Congressman and a President of the Congress throughout the war he was titular head of the movement during the negotiations with both the Cripps and Cabinet Ministers. He embodied in himself the unity and perhaps the most important symbol of the Congress aspiration to be a nation in its own right. His stature was thus the focal point of Gandhi's clash with Jinnah. He always maintained that politically no one but a member of the Moslem League could represent Moslem interests.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI Monday 22 December 1947

I had a most enlightening talk today with Robert Stimson of the BBC. He has just returned from a fortnight's co-existence with Karaikudi. He says he had an important interview with Jinnah who covered the theme of Pakistan's unity in the Commonwealth and the implications of British neglect. From what Stimson tells me there can be little doubt but that Jinnah himself is the peacemaker and in part of the anti Mountbatten campaign which is now being developed in Pakistan. The attack is concentrated at the very beginning of the process but is designed to exploit a very wide front Mountbatten's vulnerable position as Governor General of the Dominion and to create the general impression of a man who is an anti Moslem and a pro Hindu.

Although this is fully recognised in responsible circles there that Mountbatten's moderate influence on Jinnah seems to have shed the firm conclusion that Mountbatten's continued presence as Governor General is a dangerous factor in Pakistan's future, particularly in its relations with the rest of the Commonwealth. Stimson suggests that Jinnah's attacks on Mountbatten are the foil to his representation of British neglect. The criticisms are being widely reflected at lower levels and among European old hands. Complaints are directed in particular against Mountbatten's reference in speech during his recent London visit to only three per cent of the Indian subcontinent being affected by the recent disturbances. This is not surprising from the perspective of a fairly acceptable either to the purveyors of common sense or of prejudice.

Stimson's general impression was that subject to four great queries Pakistan was perhaps a stronger entity than some of the critics regard. Those queries were whether she could avoid the war which Jinnah had long to live (in Stimson's opinion it is likely to happen in August and he was himself at pains to say that he hoped to be operating for at least two years) whether he could secure economic support and whether he could retain any of his Hindu subjects.

He thought that the Sindi Moslems were not so bitter as those in the West Punjab and although Karachi was safer for Hindus than Delhi was for Moslems the Hindus there were under a constant cloud of threat and petty persecution. A good deal of the rice crop had not been gathered in. There had been a whole sale exodus of bank staffs and a complete breakdown of the Hindu economy on which so much of the State depended.

Simson was astounded at what he called the fantastic optimism of the old guard but there was as well a core of young efficient and incorruptible Moslem leaders imbued with a sense of mission who were determined to make the new State work. Everything depended on whether they could succeed.

On Saturday the Indian Cabinet finally decided to appeal to the United Nations accusing Pakistan of helping the raiders. Liaquat and Mohammed Ali have been in Delhi since last evening but nothing has emerged from yesterday's or to-days discussions which makes it possible to cancel or postpone this sombre decision. Most of the time has been taken up by the usual atrocity claim and counter claim. Nehru today handed in the official letter of complaint which is a necessary preliminary to a reference to the United Nations. Liaquat promised a reply in due course. So ends the first phase of the political and diplomatic struggle over Kashmir.

**GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI Friday 26th December 1947**  
Following the failure of the Delhi talks with Liaquat earlier in the week a very critical situation has developed both over Kashmir and the payment of the cash balances. Mountbatten's warnings about the dangers and limitations of Kashmir as a battle ground are being all too quickly borne out. Indian troops in Kashmir suffer a similar handicap to the Russian forces in Finland during 1939 when Russian superiority in man and weapon power was largely offset by the nature of the terrain.

The full weight of Mountbatten's military authority is against any extension of already vulnerable and tenuous lines of communication. Already the outpost garrisons are in trouble. The garrison at Poonch is completely cut off save for air supply. Two infantry companies at Jhangar attacked by a force of some six thousand invaders have suffered heavy casualties and a relieving force has had to turn back.

But perhaps the most serious news is of a concentration of another formidable enemy force estimated at six thousand in the Uri area. Uri is the farthest point so far reached in the advance towards Domel. Withdrawal from Uri would renew the threat to Baramula Srinagar and the Vale all over again. In Mountbatten's view the fall of Uri might well give a new impetus to the argument stressed with ever increasing force in Government circles that the only way to deal effectively

By Brigadier Desmond Young who was for some time in charge of Public Relations at GHQ India when Lord Wavell was Commander in Chief.

"The impact which writes of Lord Mountbatten's forceful personality and astonishing energy produced electrifying results. He wept the Indian Leaders along at such a speed that they had no time to draw breath to quibble. In this highly charged atmosphere Partition was rushed through before the Hindu hordes of the id had time to gather weight. He then turns his attention to what he calls Mountbatten's two mistakes. First, he asserts, he went not only to consent to splitting the Indian Army but also to insist on accelerating the process. This would have been to let the Army intact under Field Marshal Auchinleck for two years from Independence Day to assist the Government impartially in the maintenance of order. His second mistake was to accept the Chief Generalship of the Indian Union when Pakistan refused a Joint Governor General. His acceptance perhaps under pressure from His Majesty's Government is vitally problematic in the final position in the eyes of Muslims when the tribal territories are dealt with."

In view of the pace and position currency of these particular criticisms I have left to Joyce a London assessment —

"I need hardly stress that Mountbatten and I may well have fervently welcomed any practicable arrangement for Auchinleck to stay in Britain while Jinnah, who was master of all in refusing to have anything to do with the retention of a joint military system after the transfer of power and in demanding the immediate creation of the Pakistan Army. The backup of the Supreme Command was expedited not only at the request of the Government of India without whose goodwill Pakistan might not exist in the matter would not have been served but also at Auchinleck's own recommendation. In any case Pakistan's objection as stated by Liaquat to Mountbatten was based on a completely distorted concept of the Commander's real powers."

As for the second mistake after referring to the highly embarrassing implications of Jinnah's ultimatum rejection of the Joint Governor Generalship I have pointed out —

"The Congress offer to Mountbatten was made without any strings attached to it and quite apart from possible Moslem reactions it is certain that Congress opinion would with far more justice have objected to his refusing the offer simply because the Moslem League had not invited him as well. But the true position about the Moslem attitude is that a dominant factor in Mountbatten's decision to accept the Indian title was the pressing plea of both Jinnah and Liaquat made in the

own and Pakistan's behalf that he should do so. There is no reason to doubt but that their request was made in anticipation of trouble ahead. So if Mountbatten is now placed in a false position with Moslem opinion the remedy rests with those responsible for guiding it in Pakistan.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI Wednesday 31st December 1947

1947 ends in foreboding over the future of Indo Pakistan relations generally and Kashmir in particular. It is difficult to stand back and assess the credit and debit balance of our last nine prodigious months in India. The immediate situation seems all ways to overwhelm our thoughts and attention. The occupational risk is to be preoccupied with the daily task.

Over Kashmir at least we go forward into 1948 with some clarification of the crisis. Attlee has as Mountbatten anticipated turned down the proposal of a lightning personal intervention feeling that there is no specific role which he would be able to play save that of conciliator in general terms and he prefers to rely on the proper channels of the United Nations. He has however sent an excellently worded message to Nehru urging caution.

On receipt of his reply the Government have decided to proceed with their appeal to the United Nations without waiting any longer for Liaquat's reply. The wording of the complaint which has been drafted while Mountbatten is still in Gwalior is moderate in tone save for one disquieting phrase which reserves freedom of military action to the Government if the situation requires it. Mountbatten has pointed out that the Security Council Committee cannot be expected to react favourably to a threat or even the hint of one.

Mountbatten has done everything in his power to urge on Nehru what an invasion of Pakistan territory would mean particularly as the whole problem at India's request is *sub judice*. Quite apart from the catastrophic effect on world opinion it would involve the automatic departure of British officers serving with both Dominions. This in itself might well I suppose work more immediately against Pakistan's interest than India's but in any case I think Nehru is well aware that any such move would mean that Mountbatten's mission would be at an end.

Liaquat's reply to Nehru's formal letter of complaint came in just after the dispatch of the Indian reference to the United Nations. It is a lengthy catalogue of counter-charge deliberately not confined to Kashmir but ranging over the general theme of India's refusal to accept Partition and resolve to destroy Pakistan. He wants the intervention of the United Nations to "rescue" from Junagadh to genocide so that all pending differences be possibly resolved.



As for note to the Mountbatten side elements it is encouraging to learn from the situation reports that no attack has developed in Uttar Pradesh and that the Indian troops there have made no contact with hostile forces for Mountbatten continues to feel that this would be the event which might settle the wider conflict. My new year motto is 'Patience and proportion'. Clearly we shall need more than our ration of both in the coming year.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

### CALL TO REPENTANCE

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Wednesday 7th January 1948*  
 With the willing concurrence of P. L. the Minister for States Mountbatten is meeting the major and minor Princes in two separate conclaves. Government House this week and noon again is trying to provide them with the impetus which seems to be so seriously lacking from within the Mountbatten ranks. He urged upon the major Princes today the desirability of forming a committee of princes to regulate the conduct of the dynastic affairs.

During the general discussion Alwar alone seemed fit to remark that in high pitched and querulous voice he observed of the people wish to live in hell one should not compel them to live in paradise. When Mountbatten was trying patiently to explain the advantage of the Princes and their families joining the Indian Union Diplomatic Service Alwar interrupted him to say 'This should not be a favour. If Mountbatten can be satisfied secretly why not talk to me?' I am not there deep enough. Mountbatten replied sharply 'I am just trying to make common sense of the situation. In the independent India that at the morning meeting Bhopal gave V. P. a brotherly embrace which is usually reserved for a salutation from one Prince to another.'

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Friday 9th January 1948*  
 Patrick Maitland, editor of *The Fleet Street Letter* whom I met on my last visit to London has written asking me a number of questions for background guidance. Seeking my views on the prospects in Kashmir he asks 'Is this conflict going to drag on for many months and even for years does the Indian Government honestly suppose it will gain anything by going to the Secu'

rity Council or are the Indian forces in such an unfavourable military position that the Indian Government has taken this course in desperation?

I have replied The general perspective in which I see the conflict from here is that Kashmir is really the last major outstanding issue between the two Dominions. If one could achieve the basic solution here everything else would fit into place. The battle ground is not of India's choosing is at the end of long and bad lines of communication and is one in which it will always be difficult for her to deploy her full strength. Therefore from the military point of view we could anticipate a protracted struggle. The problem however is essentially political and centres round the will and capability of both sides to give effect to a cease fire. In this respect it is somewhat similar to the Indonesian dispute.

I think it would be quite wrong to indicate that India is appealing to the United Nations as the result of military desperation. On the contrary India feels that she has a very strong case both morally and in law and that the Security Council is the proper forum in which to present it. Perhaps the most dangerous feature of the situation is unwillingness to recognise what the cost of failure would be or to appreciate that a war on this issue between the two Dominions would surely bring the sub-continent into the vortex of the world power politics struggle.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Saturday 10th January 1948*

This afternoon Mountbatten completed Part Two of his exhortation to the Princes. This time he spoke to some fifty of the minor brethren or their representatives arguing once more the wisdom and virtues of mediatisation and urging again as precedent the example of the German principalities and the settlement they made with Napoleon's Confederation of the Rhine. Many of the rulers whose knowledge of history and political theory had been severely taxed came away from the conference blinking as though having looked too long at a bright light. But I think it is fair to say that a few of the more discerning members are alive to the sense and value of his advice.

To night the Mountbattens gave a dinner party to the Princes. It is good to find His Highness of Dholpur at Government House in the thick of all the discussions for when I last saw him in July he had given me the impression that he would retire to his State and never be seen in Delhi again. I had a talk with him after dinner and he is worried about agitations which he feels the Congress are inspiring in his and neighbouring States. When I asked him whether he had any details the only instance he gave was a recent inflammatory speech by Dr Lohia in Gwalior. Dr Lohia however is one of the leaders of Jai Prakash Narain.

Socialist wing of the Congress which may soon be splitting off altogether from the Congress movement. They have in fact been opposed to Mountbatten's and Patel's Accession policy and by no stretch of imagination can they be regarded as agents of Patel or the States Ministry.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI Monday 12th January 1949

The first news that Gandhi's mission began another of his major fasts unto death came this morn'g to me at a Press party at the Delhi Gymkhana Club. The startling news saddened me. The announcement that the Prayer Meeting made its intended impact on all of us. I particularly surprised me earlier in the evening returning from a game of squash. The Verno had passed the French and was in Mountbatten's study and could see Gandhi there with him for an interview which I was aware had been fixed at short notice but did not understand it to have any special significance.

He had in fact come round to see Mountbatten immediately after his Prayer Meeting at which he had declared that the fast would end if and when I was satisfied that there was a run out of heat of all communalities brought about without any outside pressure but from an awakened sense of duty. With God's my supreme ideal counsellor I felt that I must take the decision without any other adviser. I decided prior to the Prayer Meeting that he had been observing a day of silence with the result that neither Nehru or Patel was informed in advance of his proposed course of action. He then went on to lay bare his profound unhappiness at the continuing bad communal atmosphere in Delhi which seemed to preclude all the elements of life and his resolve to meet this situation by his own chosen act of atonement.

During the talk with Mountbatten Gandhi went out of his way to ask for a frank opinion about India's first 10% pay to Pakistan the fifty five per cent in the cash balances which Mountbatten did not hesitate to give him saying that he considered the step to be both untimely and unwise. Gandhi said that he proposed to take the matter up with Nehru and Patel. He added that he would make it clear to them it was he who had initiated the inquiry and so kept Mountbatten's view.

As for the first Mountbatten to consider that it would be impossible for him to challenge the dictates of Gandhi's conscience and to let him with this situation that he welcomed his behaviour and earnestly hoped that it would serve to create the new spirit that was so badly needed. On this note of full lowship and understanding Gandhi left to go to effect to his great decision. The first is due to begin at eleven o'clock to-morrow morning.

At the Gymkhana Club the party fairly quickly dissolved as various correspondents went back to file their reports and interpretations of the act. The general impression was that the fast was well timed and that nothing less drastic would regain for the Mahatma the psychological ascendancy achieved in Calcutta. Much would turn upon the attitude of the Sikhs over whom Gandhi had so far been unable to exercise the same measure of influence as over Hindus and Moslems. Throughout his stay in Delhi there had of course been the ever increasing pressure of Sikh refugees from the East Punjab upon the capital.

There was also considerable speculation about the meaning and effect of Gandhi's move in terms both of his own and Nehru's relations with Patel. Gandhi's intervention over the unilateral proposal to impose a sanction against Pakistan by withholding the fifty five crores under the partition of assets is likely to give edge to a Government crisis. For he has clearly reacted very strongly against this move and seems to be prepared to face a head on collision with Patel about it.

Nehru and Patel have undoubtedly been drifting apart a process which has a cumulative effect as an ever growing number of followers hitch their wagons to these two major stars in the political firmament. The rivalry is thus intensified by their respective satellites. Gandhi may well hope by a supreme effort to heal the breach between the two great men in the Indian Government realising that he alone has the status to do it and that if he fails not only the Congress Party but the entire regime would be placed in deadly peril.

You have to live in the vicinity of a Gandhi first to understand its pulling power. The whole of Gandhi's life is a fascinating study in the art of influencing the masses and judging by the success he has achieved in this mysterious domain he must be accounted one of the greatest artists in leadership of all time. He has a genius for acting through symbols which all can understand. Fasting as a means of moral pressure and purification is part of the fabric of Hindu life. There is the unmistakable sense of everyone being drawn out of his preoccupations to share in a painful responsibility which no man can wholly ignore.

GAJNER BIKANER *Wednesday 14th January 1948*

In spite of Gandhi's fast it has been decided not to cancel Mountbatten's long awaited visit to Bikaner but as a mark of respect for the Mahatma there will be no State banquet.

Just before our departure Patel and Nehru came along separately to see Mountbatten. Their immediate reactions to Gandhi's decision are perhaps the best summary of the two men's divergence of opinion and outlook at this time. Patel complained that the timing of the fast was "very wrong" and that it was

to have the opposite effect to what the Mahatma hoped from it. Whether Nehru could not conceive his pleasure and admiration for Gandhi's action.

LALLUJI PALACE, BIKANER *Friday 16th January 1948*

On our return to the Palace while waiting to go into lunch I had an illuminating talk with Panikkar who still is running the Mahatma's Dewa. He put me in touch about the outcome of Gandhi's first speech in which he viewed the situation and directed at Patel. He added that there would be a definite clash between Patel and Gandhi when Gandhi returned to Delhi in a few months. Gandhi did then. V. I. Bhambhani I always thought you would never one day go to the two Patel was in tears for his misunderstanding with Bapu.

Panikkar interpreted the relationship thus. Patel, although controlling the machine, is aware that Gandhi is the master of the masses and that he could never hope even if he so wished to break the Mahatma's influence on Gandhi. On the other hand, the strength of Nehru's hand is not so strong that he can break Patel in the process but only to bring him to heel.

Then I did Panikkar's picture but to Gandhi's political came. He said he had just had his first meeting with him after a gap of many years and had dug him out slowly. He came to the conclusion that I did not know the States. Gandhi's protest was that he was not going to cry. I said that I had no answer to this. He said Panikkar. It is true. Gandhi's habit of adding to his speech the language of his audience. The two of them had a conversation. His Prayer Meetings were accepted in their simplicity. In private, however, he was a little more subtle. He had noticed that Gandhi was backed by what he called a 'ramakrishna' religious system. Personally, I left room for him to come from all parts of India to report on the state of the country.

We heard that the Cabinet decided to transfer the fifty-five crores to Pakistan as a gift of good will. After the film had been shown, Mountbatten said this was the best news in three months. But Panikkar expressed concern to me about Patel's possible reaction to the decision.

Mountbatten spent a very useful day with him. He said that Panikkar this afternoon. This I believe is the first full-length meeting they have had for some time. The more I see of Panikkar, the more I am impressed by his intellectual power and political shrewdness. He is the rare blend of the scholar and the man of affairs who can bring his profound knowledge of history to the service of a temporary crisis. He is one of

Bapu means Father—a term fed into us by the Mahatma. Gandhi by many of his followers as well as in the Indian Press.

about half a dozen men who may well have a great influence in the shaping of Indian policy at home and abroad. He has his enemies and there are some who assert that he is ambitious and untrustworthy but I suspect that he suffers from the jealousy of those who resent being confronted with a superior intellect. It is the occupational risk of very clever men to be regarded as dangerous by their less gifted brethren.

Panikkar tells me that his advice was that Mountbatten should give top priority to the wider problem of Indo-British relations rather than to the specific Dominion Status issue. He stressed that Nehru was now more firmly persuaded of the need for Indo-British understanding. He hoped that Mountbatten would not be leaving until the broad principles had been settled. Mountbatten has suggested that Panikkar should accompany Nehru on his proposed visit to London in February and should remain as a constitutional adviser to the Central Government rather than leave for China\*. His instinct however is to leave India for a couple of years and not get too closely caught up in the political imbroglio.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Saturday, 17th January 1948*

We left for Delhi first thing in the morning duly impressed by this example of Princely hospitality. Bikaner blends tradition with reform and is setting a good example to his fellow rulers in promoting his subjects' social solidarity among themselves and their political loyalty to the new dispensation.

Shortly after our return the Mountbattens called on Gandhi at Birla House. He is by now very weak. After he had greeted them with the words 'It takes a fist to bring you to me' they had a brief discussion on the possibilities of breaking it. Gandhi said he had laid down seven conditions all affecting the basic security and civil rights of Moslems both in Delhi and India as a whole which would have to be implemented before he could be induced to call it off.

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\* Panikkar duly became the first Indian Ambassador to China originally to the Nationalist Government of Chiang Kai-shek. After its overthrow on the Chinese mainland Panikkar's general prestige was such that Nehru was able to send him as first Ambassador to the Chinese Peoples Republic where he presented his credentials to Mao Tse Tung. In this position he was continued to act as a vital link between East and West both during the Korean crisis.



world's great men. Neville told how Nehru disposed of a man who was lying down in the road in front of Birla House and stopping all the traffic from coming or going. The man described himself as the voice of Krishna. After some fruitless argument Nehru picked him up by the feet and pulled him away, rubbed his hands and walked off as if nothing had happened!

Sheean in the course of an interview at the Prime Minister's house was taken into the dining room by Nehru to see a Chinese painting. While groping about for the light Nehru stumbled over the body of a man asleep on the floor. "Someone is asleep here," he said, and proceeded to carry on the rest of the conversation in whispers!

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Tuesday 20th January 1948*

Rejoicing over Gandhi's survival from his fasting ordeal were marred to day by a bomb incident in the garden of Birla House. The bomb, a home made affair, went off during the first Prayer Meeting which Gandhi has attended since the ending of his fast. The force of its explosion however was broken by a wall which was slightly damaged. No one was hurt and there was no panic. Gandhi continuing to conduct the meeting without showing any sign of awareness that anything untoward had happened. Indeed Lady Mountbatten who went straight round to visit him found him wholly unperturbed. He told her he thought that military manoeuvres must have been taking place somewhere in the vicinity.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Monday 26th January 1948*

The injection of the United Nations into the Kashmir crisis has slowed down the tempo of the political dispute almost as effectively as the weather has blanketed the military operations. The first session of the Security Council did not take place until the 15th January. After full length statements of case and a series of private conferences a preliminary resolution setting up a commission was passed on the 20th. It has always been Mountbatten's hope in supporting a reference to the United Nations that it would lead to the earliest possible dispatch of a commission—certainly by the end of January—to the scene of the conflict, but it now seems that the Security Council are settling down to seek an agreed resolution on the general issues of principle beforehand. If this proves to be the case then a big political opportunity may well have been missed and a serious psychological blunder committed.

The Indian and Pakistan Heads of Proposals bring out two main points of difference in their answers to the questions what if any terms are to remain in Kashmir before the arbitrator



held and should the existing administration be changed? Ind  
wants the present administration to be transformed into a Council  
of Ministers under Abdullah. The Council should  
then constitute a National Assembly elected on Proportional Re-  
presentation. The Assembly should then elect a new Govern-  
ment which should hold a plebiscite under United Nations con-  
trol. India insists on the complete removal of the British  
and the denial to them of Privileges before being ready to  
order the withdrawal of Indian troops.

Pakistan's position is quite simple. It demands for multi-  
national and complete withdrawal of all forces and a neutral Ad-  
ministration. At Lake Success this is the essence of the  
British position and certainly for the delegates several of whom  
until a few weeks ago had probably never heard of Kashmir  
as a holiday resort to understand. But unless India can  
establish a merely formal recognition of her legal title and  
moral grounds she cannot participate in any dis-  
cussion in Delhi with the prospects of the near future.  
alism

AGRA Tuesday 27th January 1948

Kingsley Martin, Editor of *The New Statesman* and Nation  
and champion of the Indian League, is paying his first  
visit to India. He is a very old friend of  
the At the moment Kingsley is staying with us at the Com-  
pound House. During the last period by the Ministry  
to of Nagpur he had the idea of taking him on a sight-seeing  
tour of Agra and the Taj Mahal but this was easier said than  
done as nearly all the Government House transport was tempo-  
rarily indisposed. N. H. is the one of our dilemmas. Once per-  
centage of road police and down the hot and dusty  
road on our pilgrimage to the houses of Mughal greatness.

A journey with Kingsley is a little like an education. He has  
taken away in his memory a whole library of significant facts  
and experiences to which he can refer at a moment's notice. But  
in spite of many years of hard editorial effort he is a wonder-  
ful boy. He is I suspect that we tried out with a certain pre-  
judice against the T. J. for being as famous as it is. I had  
seen him before in the afternoon when he looked like some  
figure of itself in glowing white on green.

On reaching Agra first pass through the mighty tomb  
of Akbar. We were pleasantly surprised to find that the T. J. was  
the best in the world and that its actual environs were  
literary. It was filled by commercial traffic. Like all the great  
Mughal monuments it enclosed a delightful Humayun's tomb in  
the Lod Gardens at Delhi. The tomb itself is completely in  
until you pass through the outer entrance. The first sight  
the whole image is fully revealed. Critical judgment is sus-

perided and as one wall's from shade into light along the formal line of cypress trees the serene splendour of the place takes possession of the senses

For me the contrast with the aerial vision was complete from within it looms very large and the dazzling whiteness is shot through with exquisite inlay which includes words from the Koran engraved in black marble We first saw the Taj in the glow of late afternoon and then returned after dinner to see it under the full moon We both felt that the romantic haze and the blurring of outline and detail meant some loss of the esthetic magic of the daylight vision There were no crowds of sightseers to disturb the stillness and only the lights of Agra and the bend of the River Jumna below recalled us to the world of life and movement

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Friday 30th January 1948*

Mountbatten arrived back by air from Madras early this afternoon with his two daughters Lady Mountbatten having stayed on to complete engagements They have had another very arduous tour where it seems they once more received an overwhelming welcome from vast crowds that lined the streets wherever they went At about ten to six I ran into George Nicholls who told me that there had been an attempt on Gandhi's life and that he had been hit in three places Half an hour later I heard from Pearce Mountbatten's driver that Gandhi was dead He had heard the news over the car radio and told me that His Excellency was going round to Birla House immediately

While I was standing by the car Mountbatten came out and motioned me to come with him He was very tense and spoke in short staccato sentences He said that Rajagopalachari had rung through from Calcutta impressing on him the need to take the utmost precautions about Nehru Only two days ago while in Amritsar two men had been arrested carrying grenades while he was addressing a public meeting

Mountbatten thought this was a most grave development and that Nehru was now entirely alone and politically exposed Everything depended upon his capacity to keep a grip on the situation in the next few hours It was absolutely essential that he should speak to the nation at the earliest possible moment but at the same time should give himself the chance to think out what he was going to say because the nation would inevitably take its lead from him

By the time we had reached Birla House the crowd had gathered and was peering into the windows of our car only a few recognising Mountbatten in the dark All was confusion Young men were milling around in the grounds and pressing against the french windows Inside most of the members of the

a d leading Congress men we e tanding v th the l stles ness of gri f We m de our way to wh t I bele e was Gandhi s bed room The e was a sm ll f ncense In de the room ver abo t forty pe ple n l ding Neh a d Patel E ry ne w s in tears Just o tside v re numer s s ndals huch pe ple had taken off b fo e e te ing the o m

In the far orner was the body of Gandhi At fi st I thought t was mplet ly c v red in l ge bla ket but then I eal sed that his head being held up by on of ab ut doz n women who e e seat d ound hm ch nting praye s and obb g n pl int e hythm Gandhi f ce v as t peace and looked rathe pale in th b ght light Also th y had tak n a ay the st el mmed glasses wh h had become lmost an integral p rt of h feature The sm ll of th ncene the sou d f the womens voices the f all til body the leepng fate nd the lent wit nesses—thi s pe h p the most emot nally ha ged mom nt I ha e e er experenced As I st od the I felt far for the fut r b wldern t t the act b t al o a se e f vctory rather than d f t that the st ngth f th ltt man id as and ideals f om the very for e of the de t n he a commanding here and now w uld p ov t tro g f r the ss ss n bull ts a d th idea they repre nt d

After standing f r some tun n ile t homag w mov d ut nt the main h ll As th evenng d ew on th crowds ut id m lupled ne co ld ee th r f ces pe ed aga n t th wind w and they bang d m st ntly up n the gl ss Membe s of the Cabinet w e one room and Mountbatten w nt in t talk to them

I ha d Mountbatten y ng th t t the r l st nt rvow G ndh had s d that h d ar t h wa t b ng about f ll re oncl t n betw en Nehru d Patel On hea ng th s th y dramat cally mbraced each ther He cam ut f m m nt l te say ng that h h d uccceeded n g it g Patel to b oadca t at the same time as Nehru to nght Th h f ll—w th ; sice—v s a most importa t po nt to hav ganed H e t s ted that e erything t rned on Nehru s g pp g th tu t n mmed tely

The tens n is uch th t one careles v o d nd rumou w ll spread lk a fo est fir E cn on ou arr al Mountbatten was gre t d by a scaremo g r wh t ld hm It was a Mosl m ho d d it At that m ment we st ll d d n t know the rel g n and n m of the ass but M u thatt n appreciating that if it w a Mo l m we we e lost anyhow and th t noth g e ld then av rt the most d sa tr s cial wa replied in a fla h Y u f ol don t y u kno t was a H nd

I learnt from V P Menon a few m nutes later that th assa s n was apparently M hratta who fl ed three times t po t-blank r g j H as G ndh w s lea ing to tie d h s Pr yer Meet ng I also spoke w th the Doctor wh was s mewh t dshe ell d nd

who had attended Gandhi in his last moments. He complained that there had been no medical stores in the house but admitted that they would have done no good. Gandhi had just had time to sip a little water before losing consciousness which he never regained.

There was a considerable discussion about the funeral arrangements. It seems that Gandhi has left the most explicit instructions through his Secretary Pyarelal and others that his body is not to be preserved or embalmed. On the contrary in accordance with Hindu practice it is to be cremated as quickly as possible. Gandhi was strongly opposed to any special worship of his remains.

Mountbatten had rather favoured allowing at any rate some twenty four hours for the funeral to be properly arranged but it is clear that it will have to take place to-morrow and will impose a very heavy strain on the Delhi administration. At Mountbatten's suggestion Nehru agreed that the whole thing should be taken over by the Defence Ministry and that all available troops in Delhi should be on duty. Mountbatten has put his own Body Guard and the Government House Gurkhas at the disposal of the Area Commander.

As the moments went by with people standing or sitting about in various parts of the house—some like Maulana Azad in silent contemplation others like K. M. Munshi acting as self-appointed organisers and trying to take charge of things—the crowd outside was steadily growing in numbers and in its insistence on seeing the Mahatma's body. Hundreds of eyes seemed to be peering into the house from all sides and there was some anxiety whether the French windows could much longer take the strain of the throng pressing against them.

I warned Nehru of this danger of a mass invasion. He looked inexpressibly sad and careworn but talked quite quietly and with amazing self-discipline saying that all was arranged. The body would be taken outside and placed on a table to enable the crowds to file past and pay their last respects. As the clamour of the crowd increased he himself went out into their midst without any form of protection and spoke to them. H. V. R. Iengar, his secretary told me that he is really worried about the Prime Minister's safety and Mountbatten spoke earnestly with Indira and H. M. Patel stressing the need for taking the utmost precautions.

We left at about twenty to eight taking Maulana Azad and Devadas Gandhi back with us. When Devadas remarked that it must have been a madman Mountbatten replied that if that was all to it he for one would not be worrying but that there were all too many signs of its being the outcome of a calculated conspiracy. Maulana who does not allow himself to speak in English though he can do so nodded his head in

M untbatt n thought t wa great cat st ophe and only hoped  
and pr yed th t by Ga dh bec mi g a ma tyr it w uld make  
v ry ne n Ind th k ser ou ly and wher n ces ary mend  
the r ay

Back at the ADC room I found Kagsiy Maru Gordan Walker who arrived yesterday and V P Menon. V P said he was still too stunned to have any reaction but believed that it could only have good effect on all the better minds of India. While speaking the Jam Sahib came in and told us that he had flown specially to Delhi to-day in order to meet Gandhi at 6 p.m. Only this morning I myself had been in touch with Pyrelal and arranged for Gordan Walker to see Gandhi tomorrow morning.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI 51 day 3111 y 1948  
 The ough t the ght the cr d fil d p st th body for the  
 1 st d r ha # show g H's sons b d u d r k n th cere  
 m n l wa h g Aft r br kf t th Mountbatt n—Lady  
 Mountbatt n ba ng fl vn b k n the night—and m t i h  
 staff repaired to H l Ho t b p s t f r th d partu of  
 th fu l r tge o is i m l j urney through Ne a d Old  
 D h t the Raj Ghat n m m n e open p e by the banks of  
 the J mna M l t a y c n i ngent # l l thr Serv e vere mo d  
 br kly to t k up p i on th o te nd t was lear th t  
 b th the military and c l tho t e h d d n pl n d dly in  
 m t ng the alm st mpo s ble dm n r t e d m nds mad upon  
 t l em

Of our anxiety at least they could not be relieved. When the first  
 news of Gandhi's assassination broke there was momentary relief  
 unexpressed dread that this as a might have been a Moslem  
 and if which had been the case the communal tensions would  
 undoubtedly have been perilous. It is quite a pity that the  
 assassin God was not the one who had made the Hindu  
 Mahatma. The effect of this news will be to cause deep stirring  
 of the Hindu conscience.

O r ching B l H se we were llamm d nto e en a den r  
crowd than l t nght Th cortge o sst d f f er l e n g  
draped v th th Cong fla ered th ll wers a i d a n  
by pa ty of s l r Th G em r G n l Body Gu d w s  
th o s s ort M n t e s d G n e r l j st d f p s t n by the  
f n r a l e teg w th th huml l n tzen a Gandh v ld h e  
w h d Th f ur na Co g s men bo h d be n sold s n  
his m ny b tles v e e the e r fo c The B dy was b ught  
d w n fr m the balc ny d pl ced upon the b e

O ce ga n I va de ply mp es d by the seren ty f h face  
The h d s u h e n d n s f we A o n d th body sat  
G ndh son and gr rdd ught s th gr l tll we p g nd  
gently st okr g h s head Patel al o at mm ble b s de the

body pale and weary and looking straight ahead of him. He took no part in the strenuous efforts which both Nehru and Mountbatten were making to impose some order on the surrounding chaos and clear a way for the cortege to start upon its long slow journey.

The speeches of both Nehru and Patel last night were very moving and gained in strength from their lack of preparation. Apart from the personal loss the blow smites Patel with particular severity. There were first of all the reports of differences between himself and Gandhi, then as Home Minister in charge of internal security, he was officially responsible for Gandhi's safety. It is true that after the bomb incident ten days ago Gandhi specifically refused police protection, but there is clear evidence that the two attacks are part of one conspiracy and the fact remains that the police were unable to track it down before the fatal shot was fired. Indeed Gandhi's last interview had been with Patel and it was in hurrying from this talk a few minutes late for his Prayer Meeting that the assassin crossed his path. Patel resolved to undergo the immense physical ordeal for a man of seventy-two of accompanying the body all the way to the burning ghats.

At last the cortege began almost imperceptibly to move. It was now nearly eleven o'clock and immense crowds had gathered all along the route. Indeed they were far too great for either the police or military to hold in check. Their constant pressure kept the pace of the procession down to little more than a mile an hour. The slowness of the advance encouraged those spectators watching it pass by to try to accompany it which meant that in due course the hosts following along behind were almost as overwhelming as those ahead.

On our return to Government House we climbed up to the dome of the Durbar Hall and looked down on the cortege now some two miles away from us on the great open Kingsway. We could detect no visible movement and the crowd seemed to have settled round it like some vast swarm. The commentators' voice over a portable radio we had brought up with us told us that some headway was being made. Whether seeing it from the middle distance or hearing of its progress close at hand the strange irony of this scene impressed itself upon me.

We were watching I suppose Gandhi's first and last *darshan* along this Imperial avenue. Now the man who more than anyone else had helped to supersede the Raj was receiving in death homage beyond the dreams of any Viceroy. Gandhi dies one evening and is taken for cremation the following morning. Here is no long heralded State funeral all the same the people have flocked within the hour and by the hundred thousand to have one last glimpse of him. Who in the face of this overwhelming tribute can honestly assert now that Gandhi had no genuine mass following?

The Mountbatten staff and guests including most of the Governors who have arrived for a conference which it was too late to postpone set out for the Raj Ghat. Great care had been taken to avoid the route of the funeral procession but it was approached the banks of the Jumna. Our cars became swallowed up in the multitude all pressing toward the cremation ground and our speed as dictated by this.

As the Governor General and his party some twenty of us in all made their way into the great barren area it was difficult to find the place to participate the full immensity of the crowd. The ground was too flat to give a real indication of the

It was as we walked in lonely eminence toward the small brick platform and the piled logs where we looked for the

silently packed humanity and I became oppressed with much the same sense of laudrophobia as in Birla House last night. He felt that stood between us and a mass was a river of this reserved territory was a donation of Indian Air Force men holding the line in intervals of three or four yards who seemed to be in no effect then the fresh wind was of Birla House: holding back determined rush. A precaution against the danger of our party being pushed on to the flame. Mountbatten decided that and the nearest section of the crowd should stand on the duty ground.

As the time passed and the procession mounted these disciples of the Mahatma sat quietly round the funeral pyre thread garlands of small white flowers. There was the sense of ceremony in participation sequence. There was grief for kindling the fire but still in the twilight which had been opened with a tin opener, holy water was in a zinc bucket.

When the cortege at last reached the field bringing with it the vast multitude and confusion burst into bounds and as we had feared some hundred thousand people reluctantly emerged upon the sacred spot. Every one wished to carry out a last contact with the Statesmen and the Governor and peasant women mingled with the flower petals or the body for the last were piled high. The people threatened to crush us. With preparation the people threatening to crush us against the pyre the ceremonial rite took a terrifying long time to complete.

When finally the fire was kindled a great cry went up for Gandhi is immortal and the crowd now took complete possession. The desperate attempts of some of us to make a small inner donation having failed Mountbatten got up and scanning the crowds as though appraising a military situation, declared "We must go now." Linked together in human chain we did our best to follow him. His departure did much to ease an ugly situation for it started an exodus just where and when the pressure was most intense. The crowds quickly picked him

out in his distinctive Naval uniform and did their best to make way. As we slowly extricated ourselves the flames and smoke of the pyre billowed upwards.

It would be idle to say that the mood of this vast assembly was particularly mournful. It left much more the impression of a demonstration arising from the desire to witness a memorable spectacle. Judging by this afternoon grief does not seem to be by any means the sole response of Hindus to a funeral and their belief in immortality would seem to be rather more robust than ours when it comes to the test of ceremonial self-expression.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Monday, 2nd February 1948*

Bob Stimson called round to see me this afternoon. By his accidental presence at Birla House when the fatal shots were fired he was able twenty five minutes afterwards to broadcast in the B B C's one o'clock news an eye witness report which beat the entire world's Press. There can surely be few precedents for such a scoop in the history of broadcasting. Undoubtedly this first intimation of the event must have done much to enhance its dramatic impact on the British public. Bob tells me he had no intention of going there for himself but had at the last minute accompanied Vincent Sheean who had particularly wanted to attend a Prayer Meeting. Vincent Sheean on witnessing the tragedy was so deeply affected that he was unable to cable back any immediate account of it to America.

Bob tells me that an American Embassy official was the unsung hero of the occasion. He was the first to realise what had happened and to leap forward and grip the assassin by the arms. There was great discipline among the crowd and no one ran away. Everyone's first thought, he said, was for the old man's safety. Bob tells me he has seen the assassin the Mahratta Vinayak Godse. He is by no means uneducated and edits a small provincial newspaper. His attitude was completely intransigent.

Cut me into little pieces, he said, and I will still maintain I did right.

Nehru has spoken with great frankness in the Assembly to day. The Government, he said, must bear responsibility for not ensuring the safety of Gandhi's life and of thousands of other lives. Bob feels that the spirit of assassination may well have been encouraged rather than exorcised. He is off to see a mass memorial meeting and is wondering whether there will be any further attempts on leaders' lives. He described the situation as Grand Guignol in the open air.

Mountbatten's meetings with the Governors of the new India have of course been completely overshadowed by Gandhi's death but it has been decided to proceed with them and the Governors have been able to strengthen the administration in its resolve to put down communal violence. C. R. in his capacity



a Governor of Bengal advocated immediately the suppression of all political organisations with communal objectives naming in particular the Hindu Mahabha and its militant wing, the RSS.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Tuesday 3rd February 1948*

The volume of the old reaction to Gandhi death has frankly exceeded my expectation. From every corner of the earth have come tributes and appreciation which show that his influence has reached out far beyond the boundaries of India. The full meaning of his life may not be clear to many but the importance of his mystery is recognised. A Kingsley Martin who has been here with us for the whole drama put it to me the world is not doing so well with the techniques of materialism and power politics. It recognises that Gandhi stood for something different and in view of his emphases on spiritual values probably better. He has inspired people in the conscience of mankind.

In the words of the *New York Times* He tried for perfection as the men of the Middle Ages possessed the power of his benignity greater than his political influence could be. He tread in the mood of the New Testament to love his enemies and do good to those who despitefully used him. Now he belongs to the ages.

The *Christian Science Monitor* sees him the supreme individual of our times. He has become more than a leader of India in the world. He is a world-wide symbol. The paper the morning has shown points which may be at the root of much of the misunderstanding between his aims and ideal personality. His faith that art contains the eternal ideal could move him until through moral suasion lacked the great minister but on few times thought a sense of Law. Lord Fisher had said that most people politics mean no more to Gandhi than men. But that the gentleman in him lacks the measure of his own deal and hence still that the world found in Gandhi a blend of the shifting political and with the unshakable saint. He moved the moral force of a single man.

Attlee has bowed to the great international tragedy calls him. Price among him as one of the great men of the world and a leader who and respect.

Yet the Hindu have been taken more than have been with

Truth has been spoken of the whole world. Smuts for his description of Gandhi is a valid one.

He is the

three full page portraits of the Mahatma leaves its leader page completely blank save for this one paragraph in bold type:

Gandhiji has been killed by his own people for whose redemption he lived. This second crucifixion in the history of the world has been enacted on a Friday—the same day Jesus was done to death one thousand nine hundred and fifteen years ago. Father forgive us.

## CHAPTER TWENTY THREE

## CONFLICTS CONTINUED

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Wednesday 4th February 1948*

I HAD AN interesting talk this evening with Nye\* who wanted to see me on some publicity problems. He said he was very impressed with Patel who was a real leader in the military sense. Once decisions had been taken there were no vain regrets and the objective was wholeheartedly pursued. He also had that second great gift of leadership the power of delegation. V. P. had been given the job of organising the States. Patel was hardly aware of the details. In Nye's view this was the sign of a big man.

He spoke of Communist progress in Madras. They were cashing in on local divisions inside the Congress. There was a big feud going on between Brahmmins and non Brahmmins and the Prime Minister a non Brahmin was currently taking it out of the Brahmmins. The Communists too were exploiting the failure of the monsoon by urging the suspension of harvesting operations in order to secure new relations between landlord and tenant. The Communists contained a great many young men with genuine idealism and sense of mission. Their fundamental mistake both here and elsewhere in the world he feels lies in their contempt for and breaking of the law. If they operated more within the framework of legality they would indeed be formidable.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Thursday 5th February 1948*

I have been talking to Norbert Bogdan, Vice President of Schroeders Banking Group of New York who is making a detailed survey of financial prospects and economic trends both in

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\* Sir Archibald Nye, Governor of Madras and after 1 Mountbatten's departure, United Kingdom High Commissioner, New Delhi.

India and Pakistan. He is an experienced traveller and I should say a brewer and by making his first visit to India. For all the tragic convulsions following on Independence he is deeply impressed with the achievements and potentials of the two new States.

His job back from Karachi and had an interview with Jinnah yesterday. He found him in a far more accommodating mood than he had been led to expect. Jinnah's clearly disturbed about the implications of the Karachi statement and spoke of Gandhi in much more generous terms than he is fitted to in his message. Acknowledging to Bogdan how great was the loss to the Muslims, Jinnah added that he was reputed to have said that Jinnah was in responsible position in India were plotting the economic and political destruction of Pakistan but he was ready to give them the benefit of the doubt. There is no trouble with the extremists groups and he had been favourably impressed by the Indian Government's firm handling of the situation on Gandhi's assassination.

There is one item that who seems to him of fundamental importance of the last few days to get to him and that is the Socialist leadership of J. P. Kashyap. The Congress is now an ideological Party which has won its principal city and thus a democratic constitution. Socialist movement is the chance to build a powerful influence for itself in the next five years. Gandhi's death left the Socialist with only two possibilities—open opposition to the Congress or reconciliation with it and its capture from within. Jinnah gave a Press conference which did neither of these things. He urged the need for unity while at the same time denouncing Patel thus rendering impossible any compromise with Nehru almost impossible.

Kingley Martin tells me he had a long talk with him yesterday which he found rather disappointing. Although he was still motionally and mentally numbed by Gandhi's death there was—Kingley said—certain lack of firmness in his pursuit of power which is the failing of so many civil democrats of good will. He also detected a disquieting indifference to the interests of his followers or to the critical question whether or not his aims should be taken in the Government.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Sat day 14th February 1948*

Against the background of mourning for the Mahatma we celebrate another day of attaining Independence. That it is in honour of Ceylon as a prelude to full Dominion Status. The violence and misdeeds depicted many of the manifestations of rising Asian nationalism have been not ceasingly abetted from Ceylon. The whole operation has been an accurate reflection of the people's sunny and happy-go-lucky temperament. Liberty

has come smoothly because life for all its grinding poverty comes easily. To-day the Ceylon flag with its golden lion was unfurled on the flagstaff by Mr de Silva their Special Representative in Delhi and got stuck on the way up. It would surely have remained permanently at half mast but for the obvious concern of the Diplomatic Corps some of whom were shaping to put the flag on top of the mast themselves. This encouraged the cheerful Mr de Silva to make one final and successful tug at the rope.

Both Mountbatten and Nehru spoke—Nehru in the most informal and paternal mood calling the island by its Indian name of Lanka and stressing the deep ties of religion history and culture. After the flag hoisting and the speeches there was tea—Ceylon tea. Nehru gave clear signs this afternoon that he is beginning to recover from the stunning impact of Gandhi's death and the pall of national mourning which has lain heavily upon him. He came up to us and after we had made some remark about the excellent quality of the tea we were drinking he waxed eloquent on the aesthetics of tea making commending the artistry of the Chinese who he said were reputed to infuse their tea with dew collected at dawn from the lotus leaf.

The subject of tea recalls a revealing comment made to us by Oleg Orestov the other day. He represents the Tass Agency here and is due to return shortly to the Soviet Union. He has for some time been the Honorary Secretary of the Foreign Correspondents Association continuing to live with his family in the poorer part of Old Delhi throughout the troubles. During lunch with us he discussed the transfer of power quite frankly. In an appreciation of the persistent strength of British influence he cited in all seriousness and some dismay the Indian attitude to his tea drinking habits. 'How do you like your tea?' they would ask.

By itself he would reply at which the Indian would invariably exclaim. But that is not the correct way to drink it. The British drink it with milk and sugar. Nearly all influential Indians with the attainment of Independence show themselves in his view to be quite unconsciously the exponents of the British way of life. This he implied was the ultimate victory of the imperial system—to ensure the continuity of your own thought processes and behaviour patterns among an alien people to whom you have voluntarily liquidated formal power.

Narain among others has had his answer. Nehru broadcasting to night over All India Radio declares himself distressed beyond measure by whisperings about differences between Patel and himself. Of course he said there have been for many years past differences between us temperamental and other in regard to many problems but India at least should know that these differences have been overshadowed by the fundamental agreements about the most important aspects of our public life and that we have co-operated together for a quarter of a

more in great undertaking. It is likely that at the cross in  
unanimity the facts should be petty mind and  
think of anything but the national good?

So an edipite speculation and the direct line to  
those who had doubted whether the two big men with the Govern-  
ment were able enough to hold to the line. On the responsibility at  
this time the future of the entire game depend

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Tuesday 17th February 1948*  
At our Staff Meeting day Mountbatten reviewed the disquiet-  
ing Kashmir situation. The reference of the dispute to the United  
Nations is at least offset the immediate risk of war but never-  
theless representing the gravity of the situation for us here  
in Delhi than for the Government in London or the delegates at  
Lake Success to discuss. Various suspicions are seeping into  
the mind of the Indian Government and the politically conscious  
public which taken together could well develop into a major  
international attack on India. But God will.

In the first place the immediate cause of the delay of the  
United Nations in accepting India's basic complaint that an act  
of aggression has taken place in Kashmir. They regard this as  
no more formally but a basis for a general and universal  
threat to peace which the United Nations is specially created  
to redress. Hence grow the notion that the United Nations  
being made the forum for the permanent international power  
politics. As evidence of this the published attitude of the Amer-  
ican and British delegates. W.C. Austin and N.L.B. Kerr  
criticised the Government's widely accepted of being unashamedly pro-  
Pakistan for the sake of ending the chaos.

As a natural reaction from the disillusionment which is gen-  
erally and nationally felt the British also spreading that India  
has most to hope whether in terms of mediation or even of the  
effect of the Soviet Russian and his satellite. It is felt that the public  
has sprung from the failure of the Indian delegation to make it  
make aeking Nehru ordered its call for a unilateral  
decision to be held for constitution.

On the Public Relations side I did find even worse than I  
had feared. Even the Indian Press is obliged to  
print large digestible chunks of Ayyengar speeches three or  
four days after they had been delivered. The personality of  
Shri Krishna Abdulla has a little procedure of Lake Success would not  
be reconciled and the Indian suffered accordingly. More-  
over the Pakistan delegate was the Foreign Minister Zafarullah  
Khan an experienced and popular practitioner in the United Nations  
debate who was a usual and mouth of the Indian delegates  
were awkward and angular.

Mountbatten is worried because he feels that Attlee and Noel Baker do not seem to be showing themselves sufficiently alive to the psychological influences of this dispute and that their attempt to deal out even handed justice is producing heavy handed diplomacy. The crux of the problem as seen in London is India's unwillingness to recognise that a plebiscite carried out under the auspices of Abdullah and with the sole support of Indian troops even with Security Council backing would not be regarded as fulfilling the condition of its fair conduct. In Mountbatten's opinion the United Kingdom delegate could with advantage take a less unfriendly line towards India by supporting the view that the first step should be for Pakistan to stop helping the raiders. The question of superintending the plebiscite without interfering with the legally constituted Government deserved he felt more sympathetic discussion and treatment than it has yet received.

In an appraisal of Attlee this morning Mountbatten stressed first his absolute intellectual honesty—perhaps his greatest source of strength—secondly his status as a liberator and finally his profound personal affection for and interest in India. These were assets which must not be squandered. Mountbatten finds his present constitutional position of friendly adviser irksome at times. He can no longer step in between London and Delhi and his only link now is with the King who strictly separates his various sovereignties.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Sunday 22nd February 1948*

Walter Monckton has just arrived here following a week's stay in Hyderabad. We were aware that he was due to see the Nizam during the middle of February and Mountbatten had accordingly written off to His Exalted Highness urging that he should seize the opportunity of Monckton's visit to come to a general settlement with India.

Rather to Mountbatten's surprise the Nizam at once agreed with him. I say surprise because some of the Nizam's privately expressed opinions of Mountbatten recently have been far from flattering. We are aware that he has been describing him as no friend of Hyderabad as anyhow without power and has been asserting that it was immaterial whether Mountbatten helped in future negotiations or not. But now he replies expressing the hope that Mountbatten as a member of the Royal Family of England will give your invaluable help and support to Hyderabad in the long term agreement which may be in keeping with the high position Hyderabad occupies in the eyes of the world. It is interesting to note that he always invokes Mountbatten's Royal connection as if it endowed him with some special virtue and status in negotiating with Hyderabad.

For a month after the signing of the Standstill was almost complete quite but shortly after the New

was an incident to show that the calm was deceptive. A trivial but non the less significant dispute arose over the allotment of accommodation in Hyderabad for K. M. M. Nishi, India's newly appointed Agent General. The house already earmarked for him was not ready. So it was suggested that he should go to one of the vacant Residences for the interviewing day. The Nizam at once protested against the proposal, seeing in it a sinister plot to reveal Parmantey. The Indian reply was simply that if M. Nishi was not to be allowed proper and adequate accommodation, neither he nor any other Agent General could be sent at all. At this stage Mountbatten's good offices were invoked and as a result of a brisk exchange of letters and telegrams the Nizam was induced to give way and M. Nishi duly left on the 5th January to take up his post.

By the end of the month relations between Hyderabad and India had declined to the point where it could be said that the whole Standstill Agreement was liable to be denounced by both sides. There was a dangerous crease in the number of border incidents. The policy of puppets was leading inevitably to widespread irritation. The Hyderabad Government began by imposing some restrictions on the export of metals and finished the up by threatening recognition of Indian Dominion over currency in all normal transactions, thus threatening the State.

Mountbatten estimated that of these more than of twenty crores of rupees (one hundred million pounds) was understood to have been made available by Hyderabad to Pakistan. The circumstances of this deal were obscure and disquieting. Mountbatten had been very carefully into the matter and from the evidence at his disposal it was difficult to draw the conclusion that it was arranged by M. N. Nizami, the present Minister for External Affairs, and Farooq, who was actually a member of the delegation negotiating the Standstill Agreement. This provocation was made more just because the Indian Government was negotiating with Hyderabad the fifty five crores of sterling for Pakistan. On the Hyderabad side some detailed complaints of economic blockade.

On the day of Gandhi cremation Mountbatten held his first meeting with the Ittehad Pons and Prime Minister of Hyderabad Mr. Lakshmi. He advised him frankly that his Government would meet the demands and generally try to work in spirit of friendship with India. Mountbatten doubted whether he made a very deep impression. Behind a suave outward manner he detected in Mr. Lakshmi a utilitarian bleed of fanaticism and cunning which we have been accustomed to regarding as the dominant characteristics of the Ittehad and its leaders. Mountbatten now depends on the ability of Mountbatten to persuade the Nizam and his Government to adopt more constructive policies and on Mountbatten to prevent Patel and the Indian Government

losing their patience before the resources of negotiation have been fully worked out

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Monday 23rd February 1948*

Walter Monckton and V P were both guests at one of Mountbatten's informal Staff Meetings this morning. We burst the bounds of our agenda and indulged in reminiscence about Kashmir's accession and speculation about Commonwealth citizenship. On Kashmir Monckton said that frankly the issues were not understood outside the sub continent. V P Stressed that Nishtar's\* agreement to the accession policy on behalf of the future Pakistan Government was in fact secured before the transfer of power and that Pakistan Ministers had subsequently admitted that the Junagadh accession was essentially a violation of the agreement. When Kark† came to Delhi in July he saw Patel who told him that he did not want the accession of Kashmir against the people's will. Through Mountbatten's good offices he also saw Jinnah at this time.

Discussing problems of Commonwealth status Monckton drew attention to the importance of the Nationality Bill in Britain which was it seems in some measure the outcome of a letter he had written to Cripps. He explained that the position now is that one can be a subject of the King without owing allegiance in the citizenship sense. On the general issue of India and the Commonwealth Mountbatten is preparing an *aide memoire* which he wants to have ready in time for Gordon Walker to see and to study. After his stay at Government House at the end of January Gordon Walker went down to Ceylon. He is now back in Delhi at a crucial moment in the Kashmir dispute. With the stalemate on the fighting front and a hiatus at Lake Success the physical opportunity arises for renewing informal and indirect diplomacy.

My memory of Gordon Walker goes back to my undergraduate days at Christ Church when as a young History don there he guided me through the intricacies of seventeenth century Europe. He seems to me to have all the qualifications for high office: the lucidity of the scholar's mind, a strong but attractive personality and administrative grip. He is one of the younger Labour intellectuals treading the Attlecan way of Fabian moderation.

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\* Sardar Rab Nishtar, Pakistan Cabinet Minister whose portfolio included the Pakistan Ministry of States. He was a Moslem League representative along with Mr Jinnah and Mr Liaquat Ali Khan at the decisive meetings with Lord Mountbatten on the 2nd and 3rd June 1947.

† Pandit Kark the last Prime Minister under the old order in Kashmir who had been responsible for the arrest of Nehru on his visit to Kashmir in 1946.



He sees the central issue between the two Dominions in the Kashmir dispute as being in the method of troops and how he feels it is wise to envisage the possibility of compromise both on the plebiscite and the Interim Government. He has I think been able to make for himself that Mountbatten is not exaggerating the bad impression caused here by the British attitude to the United Nations.

In the course of a long talk with Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, Nehru has accomplished Secretary for External Affairs he has I understand stressed quite firmly that friendship with Russia is obtainable only at the price of subservience and that Russia in any case has no basic interest in India. I also hear incidentally that Bajpai has taken up the question of Korea with the American Ambassador Grady. With the demarcation of Soviet and American influence along the 38th Parallel the situation between North and South Korea is very similar to that between East and West Germany. Bajpai's argument is that United States troops are not leaving Korea by which India's troops be called upon to liberate Kashmir?

At this morning's meeting I suggested that Gordon Walker should be pressed to stay in until 9th February though the possibility of a possible visit from Laquer. I feel strongly that British Ministers presence during the next few days but the Laquer and Nehru would have a more democratic and modern and compromise. Nehru's method of influencing affairs will be available in the right place at the right time.

Mountbatten called for a statement from me on the influence of the Indian caste system which he thought would open up at the United Nations. I replied that quite apart from its fundamentalist and backwardly peasant ideas that it nearly every canon of Public Relations precede had the been violated or neglected. Moreover I felt that though it is true that it had been put in a wrong Pakistani case against India in particular the illegitimacy of Congress conspiracy to secure the Maharaja's submission through Abdullah just to get such charges was not wrong.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI Wednesday, 25th February 1948

Mountbatten's dinner on Monday and the Commonwealth which sets out to make certain tentative suggestions as to how the structure of the Commonwealth could perhaps be altered particularly in nominal to allow Asian countries to form more easily associated with it is now ready for Gordon Walker. Although there has been a lot of staff discussion and thinking on this subject it is very much Mountbatten's own idea and came from characteristically bold and original. It is also well timed for the Government of India due to release the draft of the new Indian Constitution to the Press tomorrow. After a regular

tion of the draft to Members of the Constituent Assembly whose comments are required within a month a revised draft will then be formally submitted to the Constituent Assembly for final approval.

Mountbatten says frankly that although individual Indian leaders are alive to the advantages of the continued Commonwealth connection their political position has been weakened and the attitude of the Government adversely affected by the policy adopted towards Kashmir by the British delegation at the Security Council. This he puts forward as a political fact and not as something over which he is trying to moralise. He said he would like to see the word Republic expunged from the Indian Constitution in favour of Commonwealth but without promising to be successful in achieving this amendment he adds:

I think there can be no doubt that there is room for a Republic within the Commonwealth.

He points out that the word Dominion is not in any case an easy one for India to swallow after the Congress resolution in favour of a Republic. It still has a debased meaning here whether of domination or of status short of full freedom. He also urges that the term Commonwealth citizen should be considered as a desirable alternative to British subject although both terms could be used on occasion with advantage. His final point of substance is that in any arrangement made about the future structure of the Commonwealth it would be best if possible to leave the question of the formal link with the Crown unstated.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Thursday 26th February 1948*

Vernon has asked me to comment on a draft memorandum he is preparing giving a brief survey of the Accession policy to date with particular reference to Junagadh and Kashmir. After covering some points of detail I have made the following brief distinction between these two events. Quite apart from the test of majority populations the accession of Junagadh to Pakistan was in violation of the principle of geographical compulsion to which the Pakistan leaders had themselves subscribed. The accession of Kashmir was not. Moreover from the strategic and economic points of view while Pakistan had no interest in Junagadh India had considerable interest in Kashmir. There were two further special factors involved in the case of Kashmir but absent from that of Junagadh—the use of force by tribal invasion to overthrow the Maharaja's regime before accession and the presence (also before accession) of an important inter-communal political organisation in the State.

Taking into account all these other factors the accession of Junagadh to Pakistan was wholly frivolous while that of Kashmir to India was definitely arguable. It was just because of all the special circumstances attaching to both accessions that



strain and inexperience it is easier to give instructions than to ensure that they will be carried out. Patel however (perhaps from fear of implying the wider admission) was not even prepared to state in a communique that the goods due to Hyderabad which it was claimed were held up should be released. Monckton is extremely upset and Mountbatten on his return from a dinner party has spoken to him over the telephone promising to follow the matter up personally to-morrow.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Friday 5th March 1948*

Monckton left for Hyderabad early this morning and Mountbatten pursued his inquiries about the communique in his absence. He talked with Nehru who was very reasonable and sympathetic but anxious that the question should be settled with Patel as the Minister responsible for handling the Hyderabad question. Mountbatten was due to see him this afternoon but during lunch Patel had a heart attack and nearly died. He is completely laid up and has been forbidden by his doctor to do any work whatever for an unspecified period which may well cover the remainder of our term here.

I think he overtaxed his strength at the time of Gandhi's death by his determination to ride on the funeral carriage throughout the six-hour journey. When I saw him at the Raj Ghat he looked drawn and ill and seemed as if in a trance. The whole tragedy has hit him heavily and he has undoubtedly carried more than his fair share of the burden of criticism as Home Minister for the failure to see that Gandhi was properly protected. His illness now is a serious blow for the Government at a critical time in its affairs at home and abroad and it serves to underline how dependent the regime is upon its two key men.

In the immediate context of Hyderabad and the communique there is no one to be found who will assume responsibility for reversing his last decision. So Mountbatten has had to write off to Monckton that no Press statement should be issued for the present.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Saturday 6th March 1948*

Mountbatten has seen K. M. Munshi India's Agent General in Hyderabad who is active, purposeful and I would guess ambitious. He is moving up in the Congress hierarchy although lacking the particular Congress badge of honour prison service in resistance to the Raj. This not unnaturally only enhances the vigour of his nationalism to-day.

In his memorial broadcast on the Mahatma he presented himself as the student of *ahimsa* or non-violence who was ready to grapple with Gandhi on the failure of civil disobedience in 1942 because it did not stand the scriptural test of *ahimsa* as

ev k d vrath in the enemy and not love From v h t he h d to s v to M untbatt n i day it i clear that he s not plac ng ex ce s r li nc n ah ms for deal ng th Hyderabad If the act te of the Razakars a e not qui kly r strained he ad ocates sending i the Ind an pol ce to d so v h ch by h s own legal nterp et t n h c ns de s would come within the te m f the St ndst ll Ag e m nt He already c nv n ed th t the Razaka s cannot and will not b re tr n d by th e sent e gime

M u th tt n poke firmly of India need to adopt ethical and correct b ha i u i wa ds Hyde bad and t ct n s ch a way s uld be def nded b fo the b of v old p nion In the present t te f e ti tions Munshi s prop sal for police ction a b l t ly wrong M r Laik Al must be g v n a f r chance t d l th the Razak rs t impl m nt th Sta dt ll Ag ee me t nd ntr d ce a mea ur of respon ble go ernm nt

Mountbatten told me st rw rd th t v h le he h s no d ubt about M n h s dr e and abiltv h i fa f om h ppv heth r h s temperam nt r polit c l outlook fit him f s th s particul rly del cat stag i the handling of th N zam wh h calls for un usu l d pl m t c pate e d n mmu al obj ct v ty

M n kt h s ow l ft Hyderabad f r L nd n a d w ar fr aid m y well b ready t thr w n h s ha d from the b l f that further negot ti ns n th pattern of th s w e k s perf rmance ar a wast of h tum and w thout M n kt n the m rg n f Mountbatten a d plomat c i t v w ll be further narrowed down

## CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR

### BURMA REVISITED

GOVERNMENT HOUSE CALCUTTA *Mo day 8th March 1948*

WE ARE OFF on the grand tour nine d ys e all to Calcutta Ori sa R ng on and A s m The Mountbatten s schedule is fe rsome even by their high pow ed standards and s s t out in f ur slim bo kl s produced i four diff rent colo r by the Military Sec rary s indefat gable staff Travelling a l ght as possible the p rty including servants st ll compri c v r ffty pers ns and e n small exercis m cerem ni l logist cs I shall be taying on in C lcutta d ring the visits to A s m and Ori sa, h ch will enable m to me t the Calcutta ed tors We l ft Palam at 8.45 a m re chng Dum Dum a rfield B n o clock where the venerable C. R. as Governor of West Bengal, come to meet us

After the speeches were over and most of the guests had left C. R. came to my table and spoke about nearly everything with the devastating frankness of the really wise man. He said he was deeply worried about Kashmir. The country's resources were being squandered. It was like trying to mend a broken tea-cup at this party and forgetting all about the guests. He feared that Mountbatten might not be giving enough unpala- table advice. Panditji he said is capable of hearing pro- foundly unpleasant things. I replied that Mountbatten with only an advisory role left to him did not want to reach the stage where he could only irritate but not influence.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CALCUTTA Tuesday 9th March 1948

The Mountbattens after a full morning programme—Lady Mountbatten's first engagement being at 7.30 a.m.—lunched with the Bengal Press Advisory Committee at the Calcutta Club. The President of the Committee Tusbar Kanti Ghosh who is also editor of the well known Calcutta daily *Amrita Bazar Patrika* gave a short but highly polished chairman's introduction which was well above the average in expression and content for such occasions. Mountbatten took trouble over his reply which he delivered with hardly a glance at his notes. It was an opportunity well taken to establish cordial relations with a very powerful section of the Indian Press upon whom much depends for the creation of communal confidence in the partition of Bengal.

In addition to providing such important pro-Congress papers as the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* Calcutta is the main headquarters of *The Statesman*. Ian Stephens has invited me to lunch with the editorial staff and to go over the office. As Mountbatten pointed out in his speech it was from *The Statesman's* office that with Stephens' generous co-operation two newspapers were simultaneously produced—*The Statesman* itself and *SEAC* under Frank Owen's dynamic editorship which for nearly three years was one of Mountbatten's major morale raising contributions to the Burma campaign and post war activities.

During the brief intervals between engagements I have among other things been discussing with Mountbatten a further outburst by Nehru on the Foreign Press. It is disquieting and may well jeopardise the good will agreement achieved under Mountbatten's chairmanship in November.

Mountbatten tells me he had a most illuminating talk to-day with C. R. who had given his candid opinion that if Mountbatten had not transferred power when he did there might well have been no power to transfer. It might in fact have been impossible to produce any Plan at all and then the British would have been left with the whole burden and odium whether they stayed on or moved out.

RANGOON-CALCUTTA *S t d y 13th M cl 194*

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C R A ther ppar tly Pr s epre tat e p ese  
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GOVERNMENT HOUSE, C. LCUTTA *S d y 14th M cl 194*

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onv ction uld h d d t es t G ndh s w ll n 1942 b  
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It was G ndh wh pe f rmed th m cl of C lcutt I s  
September b t it : C R. wh Go ernor ll s consol d te

the communal good will which Gandhi engendered. The minorities here have looked on him for fairness and friendship and he has not failed them. To place a Madras Liberal to preside over Bengal's fanatical and factious politics was a calculated risk. His popularity to day is good to see and the communal quiet in this seething over populated hunger ridden and revolutionary city is in no small measure a reflection of his benign authority.

I went in to see him this morning and said that as far as I could tell I alone had taken any record of his tribute to Mountbatten at last night's dinner. I told him I would like to release the text of what he had said to the Press. He agreed adding in characteristic fashion that he hoped particularly that I think it



## CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

### DEFINITION AND DETECTION

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *F day 19th Ma h 1948*  
 ONCE MORE WE re b k in harne n Delh To d y the has  
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 tog th u d r the ag f the Jo nt D f n c C o u n c i l They hav  
 d c d d that thi h ld be its l t f o r m l s s i o n It was in  
 m y c a d to close dow n the 1st Ap l but Mo nt b tten  
 h d n m n d to t n t n its e i t i n g f o r m ( n d e r h s h a r  
 m h p u t i h e l e f t and th n s u c c e s s l y u n d e r the P r i m e  
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 w t h v w to th i d n g f t s f u n c t i o n d u e c o u r s e to  
 c f i l d e c o n o m q e s t c o m m u n c a t i o n s d e  
 t e r n a l f f A l t h g h t h s c o e p t d d n t c o m m d i t s e l f  
 t e t h e r s d t h t w P m M t r s r e c o g n d the v a l o f  
 the J o n t D f n c C o l p t t d c o v e f r r e g u l r  
 p e s l c o n t c t and M o t b a t t e n h d n o d f f i c u l t y n g t i n g  
 th m t g e t h t t h e y s h o u l d c o n t i n u e to m t a t p p r o x i m t e l y  
 m n i t h l y i n t r v l t d u s s m n f c o m m o n i n t e t n d  
 c n c e r n

Not the l s t r e m k a b l e f e a t u r e of the p a s t s v m o n t h s of  
 b t t n e s n d f r u s t r a t o n h a b e the l i f e l i n e of s a n i t y t h r o w n  
 o u t and g r p e d by b t h N e b r u and L i a q u i t O m l w a y s f e l  
 t h a t l m a t t e r s o u l d b e l e f t t t h t w o d t h e p r e s s u r e s a d  
 s t r t o h c h t h e y r e b o t h s u b j e c t e d r e m o v e d a f i r m s e t t l  
 m e n t of a l l o i s t d n g d i f f e r e n c e s w o u l d s o n b e s g n e d e l d  
 n d d e l v e r e d

D g t h s p a r t i c u l a r d c u s s i o n w h i t h e w a s a m c a b l e  
 a g r e m e n t n n u m b e r of c n d a r y p r o b l e m s n m e n t i o n  
 w h t e v e r w a m a d f K s h m r T h w n t f r l a c k of b c k  
 g r o d d e v e l p m e n t T h C h n e o d e l e g a t D r T a n g — t h  
 p r e s e n t h r m n f t h e S c u t y C l — h n h i s w n n  
 t i a t c p u t f o r d p p o s i s w h c h a r e t l t b c a l l y s i s  
 f c t o r y t I n d B t f r t n t l y D T n g h a n t w a t d  
 t g n w i d s p o n s o r h p t h e S e c u r i t y C o l f r h s p l a  
 W i t h t h r e s u l t t h t t s f m l k e l y to p r o o k e l i t t e r n e s  
 a n d n a r r o w t h e a l e a d y l e n d e r m r g n f n e g t i a t n d g o o d  
 w i l l S o m e t h n g s s e r i o l y w r o n g w i t h t h e p r d u r e s f L a k e  
 S u c c e s s O h f o r r e t u n t o s m m t e r s e c r e t d p l m a c y  
 t c o n t r a c t t h e e f f e c t f t h e s e p u b l c d s a g e m e n t s p u b l c l y  
 a r r i v e d a t l

The new Indian delegation has I am glad to say been reinforced by B L Sharma who is to cover the sadly neglected Public Relations side of their efforts. He was only asked at the last minute and hardly had time to pack his bag. I managed however to send him a number of personal introductions and am confident that he will do well. Sheikh Abdullah has not rejoined the party. His particular brand of self assertive oratory bludgeoned the United Nations delegates and the American public without persuading them. He generated more heat than light.

Perhaps the most disquieting though far from unexpected development in the propaganda campaign over Kashmir at the United Nations has been the attempt by Zafarullah Khan to offset India's complaint by widening the area of grievance on Pakistan's behalf and in the process to indulge in what the Americans call character assassination. He has now introduced Mountbatten's name at a moment when it is impossible on constitutional ground for Mountbatten himself to make a public reply.

We have had full staff discussions of the problem and Mountbatten has wisely decided to ensure that his answer to the allegations together with the relevant facts should be placed on the records of the Joint Defence Council before it is disbanded so that it should be brought to the notice of both the Pakistan and Indian Governments and that the British Government should be fully briefed in so far as the attacks on himself as Viceroy would almost certainly implicate them as well.

Zafarullah's two main charges were that as Viceroy Mountbatten knew of a Sikh plan from the beginning of July and that knowing it he failed to take effective action in the form of arresting the leaders and crushing the trouble makers despite previous assurances that he would.

Mountbatten's memorandum makes it clear that while no one in the higher spheres of Government was under any misapprehension about the scale of the Sikh problem and the urgency of solving it neither he nor anyone else was aware of any specific Sikh master plan. There was indeed no hint of such a plan prior to the meeting with the British Intelligence officer on the 5th August nor did the meeting itself provide conclusive proof of the plan's scale or operational significance.\* Mountbatten takes his stand on a letter of admirable lucidity dated 9th August from Jenkins which forwarded the unanimous view of all three Punjab Governors—Jenkins himself and the two successor Governors designate—that nothing more should be done

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\* See p 128 for reference to Mountbatten's acceptance of the risk of driving in state with Jinnah on 14th August following the threat of an attempt on Jinnah's life during this State



as can and should be accepted by self respecting and peace loving nations. Dawn on the other hand ventures to hope that the Security Council will show the same sense of realism as it did before and in that light view the Chinese attempt at compromise by granting one party almost everything and the other party nothing. The Pakistan argument is still that the status of the administration must be decided after and not before a free and unrestrained verdict of the Kashmir people.

The only new element in this depressing debate is a suggestion in the *Hindustan Times* yesterday—and in view of Devadas Gandhis and G D Birla's connections it is always advisable to pay some attention to *ballons d'essai* released from this quarter. Discussing terms of reference open to the Kashmiris in a plebiscite the paper states: We think it would be wrong and unjust to call upon them to vote only for accession with either Dominion. They should be given a free choice to accede to either or to be independent.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Tuesday 23rd March 1948*

Mountbatten continues to take a close interest in the whole question of India's future relations with the Commonwealth and has asked us to prepare a short situation report. There is not of course much initiative that he can take. His views are known both here and in London. Decision as to India's role and title now rests with those who frame and approve the Indian constitution. But clearly we are approaching a climactic moment in the history of Commonwealth relations when it becomes necessary to re-define a concept so largely indefinable. I recall from my school days the dictum of the wise historian that to define the faith is to limit the faithful. The Commonwealth has certainly prospered to date on an instinctive understanding of this principle.

I have just been reading a most interesting article in the January issue of *International Affairs*\* on The implications of Eire's relationship with the British Commonwealth of Nations. It is by Nicholas Mansergh† who incidentally visited India—and Viceroy's House—last summer. In this paper he advocates the doctrine of external association as being the most promising formula for the future development of the Commonwealth and as being applicable both to Eire and India.

External association involves no formal constitutional link and as envisaged by de Valera under it Commonwealth citizenship would be discarded and citizenship of reciprocal rights substituted. Eire's position in the Commonwealth Mansergh points out,

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\* Quarterly publication of the Royal Institute of International Affairs

† Abe Bailey Professor of Commonwealth Relations at the Royal Institute of International Affairs

has only been maintained so far because while de Valera has steadily pursued the doctrine of external association the rest of the Commonwealth has not less steadily refused to take cognisance of his actions. Now with only one more link remaining to be broken and Eire's declared intention to break it the agreement to differ can no longer be sustained.

In a note to Viceroy about the Staff paper I have written, 'To my mind the key question whether or not the concept of the Commonwealth is to be widened beyond the terms envisaged in the Statute of Westminster. My personal view is that the Indian decision has not been reached will probably be politically ambiguous as the Irish was and that it will then be up to the other members to decide whether the terms of membership need to be altered to include India or revid enough as they stand. Before preparing any paper on the subject I think we would be well advised to check up with Mr N. Rau whether there is any perception that some new overall concept of Commonwealth is being broached. As with India's own changed position I saw Rau at the Nepal party the other evening and said we would appreciate a free talk with him.

Given the situation it would not necessarily follow that the Indian Head of State would need to be nominated by the Crown for the Commonwealth link to be maintained. Some formula for confirming the position of the elected President might perhaps be evolved which would enable the draft constitution to go through unmodified. Citizenship may well prove to be the key test and the way would be not the preservation of India's Commonwealth status by the form of citizenship but common citizenship comprising Commonwealth states.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI Wednesday 7th April 1948

The past fortnight has been comparatively quiet. Government House. The Mountbatten has been most of the time on tour being away from Delhi on foot since the 20th March. They have tried to keep things at last completed the process postponed tour of Travancore and Cochin the far south part entirely for the Udaipur which is artificial lakes and splendid and finally have just returned today from a weekend's rest in Malabar.

There has been momentary flight else it seems not to be when the Maharaja of Kapurthala now seventy-six years old—the last senior ruler of whom he has been on the ground—referred to the Mountbattens during his speech of welcome to Lord and Lady Willingdon.

Sir Beegal Rao now the Chief Indian Delegate to the United Nations was the Senior Civil Servant primarily responsible for the drafting and preparation of the Indian Constitution.

Coherent conversation with the Maharaja of Cochin who was in a very feeble condition proved difficult as the only political question he put to Mountbatten was to ask him whether he had ever met Stalin. Otherwise his sole topic of conversation was his family which numbers in all four hundred and sixty one members. In Travancore and Cochin the dynastic system is on a matriarchal basis the sons of all the female members of the ruling family succeeding in strict rotation according to age. It is thus a matter of chance if the ruler of the day is the brother or third cousin twice removed of his predecessor. In a family the size of the Cochin dynasty the system inevitably means that a series of very old gentlemen follow each other on the throne in rapid succession.

Mountbatten has come back to meet an immediate crisis over Hyderabad. On our return from Burma there was a letter awaiting him from the Nizam. As he was due to leave Delhi again and wished in any case to phase out of the controversy acting in his constitutional capacity on advice he asked the Ministry of States to reply on his behalf and advised the Nizam accordingly. This States Ministry letter drafted originally by V. P. Menon heated up by Patel and cooled down by Nehru was not seen by Mountbatten until after its dispatch when it was still very stiff and threatening in tone. It openly accused the Nizam's Government of breaches of the Standstill Agreement and called upon it to fulfil its obligations and ban the Ittehad and Razakars.

Monckton who had previously indicated that he would be washing his hands of the whole matter has now returned to the scene reaching Hyderabad on the 28th March. The effect upon him of the States Ministry letter and the general situation which he has found in the State has been profound. Usually calm and affable he arrived in Delhi last night in a mood to do battle with all comers the Governor General included. He brought back with him the Nizam's reply a skilfully drafted document which scores several points off the Indian *demarche* and has all the hallmarks of his own inspiration. The opening paragraph of the letter speaks of information reaching the Nizam which has given him reason to regard the letter from the States Ministry as being in the nature of an ultimatum and a prelude to an open breach of friendly relations. He therefore makes a final appeal to Mountbatten to exercise his good offices and prevent such a contingency.

As the result of a very frank talk to day based upon their firm friendship and deep understanding of each other's mind and motive Mountbatten has succeeded in reassuring Monckton that the Government of India envisage no ultimatum and that they are no party to blockade. Nehru came along shortly afterwards to confirm this in person.

Another I ge r k has been thr wn int the pool h we er  
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 have b en deli r d on th 31st M ch by the fanatical lit had  
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GOVERN IENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *S d y 11th April 1948*

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 H z v Y st rday m confir m t on of th s th *H d ta T m s*  
 d th r papers d ly q t d from caref lly ch en l st f  
 s m lar m ranc s by Raz v some of which I h d not s n b f r  
 b t all m h h r co ted for as ha ng been made from  
 S ptember o w rds N v u d th t t A c ted  
 P ess f Ind dat l n Raz v seems to h ve perpetrated e en  
 more grot que v bl m e s n th n th o I am try g to  
 track dow For now he is report d as demand ng noth g les  
 than the return of ceded territory in Madras and as rting with

the bravura of a Moghul Emperor The day is not far off when the waves of the Bay of Bengal will be washing the feet of our sovereign

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Friday 16th April 1948*

Part of Mir Laik Ali's and Razvi's denial is that there was neither a rally nor a weapons week on the 31st March at which the alleged speech could have been made but this is not correct Eric Britter\* was there and I have now checked on the facts as far as he knows them He tells me that he was present at a parade between eight and ten on the morning of the 31st and that Razvi took the salute at a gathering of between four and five hundred Razakars but that there was definitely no speech made while he was there He heard the parade being dismissed and stayed on for some twenty minutes afterwards returning to a house with a veranda room where about twenty or thirty other people were also present Tea and cakes were handed round and the conversation was confined to small talk Britter adds that Razvi came to the door with him and saw him off but he is naturally in no position to say whether Razvi held any meeting afterwards So the element of mystery remains

What information I have been able to collect from the various sources suggests that Razvi's meetings public and private are regularly attended by agents both of Munshi and the Nizam No doubt to complete the circle of hide and seek the Nizam's and Munshi's sayings are being reported back by agents of Razvi The reality of these shadowy figures is anyone's guess but I am ready to believe that Razvi is providing them with ample source material and is engaged on a political campaign which if it succeeds can only end in the bloodshed it constantly invokes and in a final rupture between India and Hyderabad

Britter while certainly holding no brief for Razvi considers that India is in danger of unduly forcing the pace in its Hyderabad policy He believes that time is needed by which he means freedom from Congress or Communist pressure for some five years during which the transitions first to a Government of communal parity and then to one of Hindu majority rule can be effected Under these conditions he considers that the forces of moderation and reform would prevail but that present impatience must induce the violent answer The obverse to this image of peaceful change is that the record of the Nizam over the past quarter of a century encourages the belief that if left to his own devices and in possession of a sovereignty which he never enjoyed under the paramount power he will continue to reinforce the prerogatives of himself and of the communal oligarchies around him

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\* Delhi correspondent of *The Times*



say f w v o d s f g r t i n g to the S r d a r w h b o l s t e r e d n d  
blanketed r e c l e d n a s o f H e w a s l o o k i n g v e r y f r a g i l e ■  
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m i n d t h a t e x e c u t e a t h r t y s t i l l f l o s s f m h m T h M o u t  
b a t t e n s s p e n t a b o u t q u a r t e r o f a n h u r w i t h h m ■ d h e w a s  
o b j o u r l y h i g h l y g r a t i f i e d t o s e e t h e m

T - d y s t e a p a r t y ■ a t V P h o m t o a b t a d o z n  
j o r n a l i s t s I d a n d E r o p e t i n t r d u c e t h m t o H s H i g h  
n f k h m i r v h l o k d r y l l t a s e a d s a i d r y l i t l e  
I d e d w h e n q u s t e e a k d b o u t h s d p a t e f r m h  
c a p i t a l t s l e f t t t h e J m S h b t g v e u h o m l y o n h s  
b r t h e r P r n c e o u g d g e n r a l d o t i n t d t y I c a m e  
w y f l u n g t h t t h e h r t e h h d p e h p s b e e n I d n t  
t h c k l y T h e M a h j w h s a b k e m a n n d m s o m e  
w h a t p t h t p l i g h t h a b e m p l n g b t t l y o v r t h t r e a t  
m e t m i d t i h m H h o m h b e e n m m d e e r e d  
C b n t a c t t k n t h t h b n g g i n y a d a n c n  
t i m a t n H w n t k n o h e r t h a u t h o r t y l e s t o p o t e c t  
h m f o m t h e s n d g t M u t b t t e n h s b g h t t h e m t t  
u p w t h P t l h n h i s t h p m s e d t o d c u s s i t v t h  
N h

M o t b t t n t i l l m h h d a e r y t e s t g p t m r e m  
w i t h t h e M a h j y e s t d y p b d n g h m f o n t t k g t h  
d c e h h d p r f f r d t h m J t c c d y t h  
t h e r b y t h 15 t h A g t A t f i t t h M h a r j l n d  
t d f d h d b y y n g L k t t h e t r o u b l e t h a t  
b l e d p w h e n I d d e e d n d t h n k w h a t w u l d h h a p -  
p e o d f I h a d d o e l B t M t b t t e n p o t e d o t  
t h t f h h d c e d e d t I n d n t i m e P a k i s t a n s m p l y c o l d  
n o t h a m o e d d f t P k i s t a I d l d n t h o d  
s P t l p l d g e n t h h d b e c a t e g c a l

## CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

### STALEMATE

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Satu d y 24th April 1948*  
MONCKTON LEFT FOR Lond n on the 19th d w t t M n t  
h t t e n f m Karach p o r t s g n t h l t s o f h i s c n r s t n  
w t h t h e N i z a m H w a r n e d t h t o f t h e f o u r p o t s g r e e d t n  
D e l h t h o n e m o s t l i k e l y t o c a u s e t r b l i H y d ■ d a d t  
s t a n d m t h e w y f q ■ s t i l l e m e n t w a t h e p b l m o f p r o -  
v d n g m a c h n e r y f o r t h o m t o d c t n o f r e s p o n s i b l e g o v r n m n t  
T h e f o r m a t i o n f C o n t i t e n t A s s e m b l y n a s m p l p o p l a t i o n

basis giving the Hindus the overwhelming majority within a week would simply not be feasible for the Nizam. Monckton stressed however the need for the Nizam to insist upon a reconstruction of his Government to make it more genuinely representative of all shades of communal opinion. The Nizam had wanted Monckton to stay but he refused to do so on the grounds that he was sure he could not remain on in the State without compromising himself unless and until a new Government had taken over.

The expectation has been that the Nizam would implement the four point programme through one of his decrees or *firman*s. The *firman* was duly issued yesterday and the expectation duly disappointed. Nearly all the psychological value of its practical concessions to the need for implementing the four points has been wantonly thrown away in a phrase.

After an expression of hope that those political parties which are not represented in the present Interim Government in Hyderabad will join and take a proper share in shouldering the responsibility of the Government, the *firman* with the dialectic of the death wish continues. I have felt apprehensive that mere imitation of a form of Government elsewhere might poison the atmosphere of our country in the same way as it is doing in other places. The readiness to lose so much in order to score so little baffles the best mediating intentions.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI Wednesday 28th April 1949

Fay and I dined to-night amid fairy lights on the lawn of the Delhi Gymkhana Club. Our host was Shri Krishna\* who had collected an interesting party. The principal guest was Dr Ambedkar the Minister of Law, the leader of the Untouchables and a colourful personality in Indian politics over the past twenty years. He is now one of the principal figures associated with the preparation of India's new Constitution which finally removes the stigma of untouchability from the Statute book. As part of his emancipation Ambedkar himself an untouchable has only recently married a lady doctor who is a Brahmin. The custom of centuries cannot be uprooted overnight and the event has caused quite a stir. His wife was with him this evening but as is the custom with so many Indian ladies on social occasions had little to say.

Ambedkar himself was in expensive vein and gave us a revealing analysis of some of the features of the new Constitution. He pointed out for instance that the special powers reserved to the judiciary under its provisions were greater than those enjoyed by the United States Supreme Court. As evidence of the enduring quality of the 1935 Act he said that some two hundred and fifty

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\* Shri Krishna well known Delhi political correspondent

of it cl u es had been embodied as they stood into the new  
Co t tut on

We had d cuss on on Cabinet g vernm nt Ambedkar re-  
f r d to the compl t that th p resent sy tem was working too  
slo ly in Ind He tho ght that wh a matt r of pol cy ffect  
g two departm t w in l d the is u should at once be  
ettled as li tw n th Min sters con d H e mmended the  
G ddes p p l and th y tem f non d partme tal Cabnet  
ch f th gr ps f dep tme tal d pute und r them He s c  
he w ery rry M ntbatten a l g b fore the Const tu  
t n va fi lly pa d The Common calth i he f l t v a  
l kely to b decided ut d the C nst tuent Assembly

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI T d y 4th May 1947

The Hyd rab d tal m te has b u g M untb tten m ch  
n ty H an b th n pe l d publ gro ds t  
br g th n g t ion to h ppy end g P pe ly pl t d h  
b li th t th sh rt tme—n w ltl mo e th n ix w k—  
before he ha d r th G ern r G l h p to C R shoule  
erve s an d cem t t b th dcs to r n ut th r d ffer e  
B t t no mean pr blem t decid j t when d h w h s in  
flu n can b b ght to bear w th th maximum eff ct part cu  
larly n M kt n b ence

M ntb tten s p p l has b n t send a l st w n my letter  
t th N zam now nd d ft has be n ct e pr par t on  
but I ha e w gh d n hea ly rg ng him not to do th unt l  
oth r r medes b s bee t ed My c s is th t the letter a  
drafted n t p sent form psychol g cally the wrong appr h

As I put it in a n t t Ronne N d ubt t ll r d w ll on  
the rec d n t m years t m but the judgem nt f h story w l  
b not only wheth r th d ce as go d but lso whether  
was o p t d t the N zam th t h p sent mood and  
s tu t on he would be l k ly t ccept t A letter f th s n tur  
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ped ent h s f led wh n t li uld be lodged s th fin l fr endly  
plea H E grea t g ft ndoubtedly d rect diplom cy by  
pe onal t t The bject t h sting Hyd rabad a  
very we ghty a d w ll b pr ed by th G ernment th u  
wh se a th ty he cannot n w g My subm s n the ef re  
that the prim ry m h uld be to get th N zam to D lh th  
n strig atta hed t th ist, b t amply for the purpo e o  
pro dng M ntbatten with n oport n ty of talki g t h m a  
man to man

At a me t ng t ten o lock th s m n ng at wh h V P Ro n  
Vern n and my lf cre pr se t Mountb tten agr d th my  
vi w V P s ed the po t that the N zam wo ld prob bly  
reply by re ew ng the nvitation f Mou tb tten to go to Hyd ra

bad but he agreed that this difficulty could be overcome on the grounds of Mountbatten's limited time here

A general talk followed on the Princely situation. The process of the States' integration which began with the group in Orissa and Bihar and which has been driven forward on Patel's behalf with dynamic energy by V P himself has for the time being at least reached saturation point.

The covenant for the largest union yet created was signed on the 22nd April. It is called the Malwa Union and comprises the Gwalior Indore Malwa group of States twenty in all covering an area of forty seven thousand square miles and involving a population of more than seven million. There has been some delicacy in naming the Rajpramukh or Constitutional head of the Union nominally elected by a Council of Rulers. Gwalior who is a twenty-one gun Prince is to have the position. Even more difficult was the choice of a capital city. Here the compromise is Gwalior for the winter and Indore for the summer capital. Bhopal has reiterated his desire to remain out of the Malwa Union but has gone quite a long way to make his peace with the Government and has announced his intention to introduce responsible government in his State.

Only to day another type of merger takes place. The State of Kutch is to be merged direct with the Government of India. This I understand is being done primarily because of Kutch's important strategic position. There are other variations of the pattern. The Rulers in the Deccan States and the Gujerat Rulers—over one hundred of them in all—have both merged under separate agreements with the Bombay province. East Punjab and Madras have entered into similar arrangements with adjoining States. One of the most comprehensive self supporting mergers has been the formation of the Saurashtra Union of the two hundred and seventeen Kathiawar States. The Rajpramukh here is the Jam Sahib of Nawanagar who has entered whole heartedly into this new dispensation and promises to play an increasingly important part in Central politics. These Unions are to be governed through popular ministries.

To-morrow yet another covenant will be signed this time for the union of the Sikh States. Negotiations here have hinged round the attitude of Patitla. He was entitled to remain out on his own but without him the other Sikh States could not achieve a viable union. V P told us that he has now definitely decided to come in on the understanding that he and his State are given a position in it commensurate with their relative importance so he is to be Rajpramukh and Kapurthala his deputy. This is certainly a great victory for V P and should undoubtedly turn the balance of power in Sikh affairs in favour of the Central Government and against the ambitious exponents of Sikhism. A separate Sikh State carved out of the East Punjab

Another remarkable development has been the formation of a Union of Rajputana Princes. It began as a merger of the smaller States but then took more significant shape as a result of Udaipur decisions. When Mountbatten visited Udaipur, His Highness told him that he had decided of his own free will to take the step as being in the high interests of his people. The Udaipur dynasty, at the most august in India and the Rule Entry, is likely to have a considerable effect on the other major Rajputana States which viable units have their individual representation in the Constituent Assembly. Of the nineteen States enjoying this initial right seven have now joined one or other of the Union.

It is highly probable that a revolutionary act in the military transformation of V.P. was signalling the merging of the forces of the State which had indeed been laid upon the son. It was the failure of the old Ptolemy and Bakker to accept the 1935 Federal Plan that they built up the whole structure of the Indian State. Only Mountbatten's immediate sponsorship of the process saved the day thus enabling the present Ptolemy and Bakker to play a vital part in the side of the new Indian Republic. Mountbatten fully confessed that he did not foresee when he negotiated the Instrument of Accession last year that the extent of subjects would be demanded or granted so as to be mentioned in the Instrument. He expressed by Nye that the situation of the State problem had not been appreciated at all. He said that the problem was far graver in its implications than the problem of dealing with the Congress Muslim League or Sikh leaders. Nye said that they had practically despaired of any friendly settlement with the Princes and had visualised trouble of incalculable dimensions after the 15th August. He would not have been surprised if it had taken at least a generation to reach the post which had by May 1948 and he felt that history would recall this as a magnificent feat.

Just how much the climate has changed can be seen with the entry of His Highness of Dholpur into the scheme of things. Last August his mind was such that any concept of merger beyond accession would have been wholly unacceptable but here he to-day his Prince fully stated and acknowledged Rajpramukh of the United State of Mysore.

Mountbatten is raised at this morning's Staff Meeting the problem of the Defence Committee Policy is still unrelated to military capability. Mountbatten reminded V.P. that he had agreed in the initial march into Kashmir as an acceptable military risk, but now the situation was different. As a commander with some experience in logical problems he felt that Nehru and Patel were not fully facing up to the military implications of the position. Mountbatten said he was very disappointed that the Defence Committee procedure was not being properly adopted.

He only hoped that when he phased out it would be kept up and begged V P to back it

Before the meeting broke up he recapitulated the revised approach to Hyderabad. He said that my proposal to try first of all to get the Nizam up to Delhi should be regarded as firing the right barrel. The left barrel of a final appeal and remonstrance he would charge to meet all eventualities but not fire

In the afternoon I went round to Hyderabad House an impressive residence at the far end of Kingsway and the vista I was shown into a large drawing room where most of the blinds were drawn. In the middle distance I could just see large photographs of the two handsome daughters in law of the Nizam who are also the daughter and cousin of the last Caliph and thus in themselves the symbols of His Exalted Highness's religious and dynastic aspirations. Zain Yar Jung duly appeared with his son to whom he introduced me and we all took tea together. He conveyed an impression of surivity and polish without any trace of the fanatical streak. I find it difficult to believe that he can have much in common with the Ittehad clique. Their trust in him and his influence over the Nizam are factors that must no doubt be assessed with some reserve at this time.

I broached the whole question of a possible visit from the Nizam. He felt that His Exalted Highness would only come up if transport was made very easy for him. It was a long journey and a special air cooled compartment would be needed. He hated flying and even the idea of it was utterly repugnant to him. He still drives about Hyderabad in his 1910 Rolls. Bombay suggested itself to Zain as a possible compromise meeting place. He also felt that Monckton would have to approve and come out again from England to hold the old man's hand. He said finally that he was not wholly unhopeful that the Nizam might agree.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Sunday 9th May 1948*

After seeing a somewhat tiresome film at the Government House cinema called *Copacabana* Vernon told me of talks between Mountbatten, Zain and V P and subsequently with Zain and V P alone. Zain only got back this evening from Hyderabad. He had carried Mountbatten's letter of invitation and has brought back the Nizam's reply. It merely confirms the counter invitation which Mountbatten was not wholly surprised to receive in the first instance by telegram on the 6th May. For the purposes of the record Mountbatten's letter and the Nizam's telegram crossed. In the reply which Zain has just handed in the Nizam gives as one of the reasons for saying no that any such move is certain to give rise to grave misunderstanding both inside and outside Hyderabad which I am bound to avoid. Vernon

me however that Mountbatten was bubbling over with optimism wholly unwilling to admit defeat and confident that if he could meet the Nizam face to face he could yet pull off an access on agreement.

Zain warred that there is a marked deterioration in the local situation. Some Government supporters have swung over to the Razakars. Indeed a No confidence vote in Mir Laik Ali is only just averted and Zain says there are men about now who regard even Razvi's moderate V.P. as a very calm and sensible address after numerous concessions as well as access to a port.

Vernon reports however that we are getting dangerously near the point where there will only be two alternatives left—force or the threat of force. I said I felt that the crux of the matter now was to know where the real power lay. What was the exact status of the Nizam? Much would depend on the appreciation he had formed of his own position both from within and from without. The Nizam himself must not be underestimated. I went on to see Mountbatten who thinks that the Nizam is at last really frightened. Apparently when Mir Laik Ali's position as Prime Minister was reserved with him he was not indignant but at once asked, 'What do they want?'

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI 12th May 1948

It is generally agreed that I should visit Hyderabad as soon as possible with the objects of meeting the Nizam face to face on Mountbatten's behalf, of forming a personal up-to-date impression of the situation and if possible inducing sufficient sense of urgency in the Nizam and his advisers for them to reopen negotiations and in general make the best use of Mountbatten's last few weeks life. At a Staff Meeting this morning V.P. who warmly approved my proposal, said there was no definite evidence that the Communists and the Razakars were actually combining together and that this was not being sufficiently stressed. Mountbatten found it difficult to believe that such an alignment could be taking place but V.P. was insistent regarding it as indeed the central fact in the situation.

Mountbatten began the meeting by asking Mr Patel's health. V.P. replied that he was better but that the irregularity of his pulses and lack of sleep. One of his entourage doctors was constantly talking to him about his pulse which only increased its irregularity.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI 13th May 1948

Before the Defence Committee (which as a result of Mountbatten's initiative has at last been called) Mountbatten invited Nehru to get him to confirm in my presence what he had

said to Mountbatten yesterday—namely that he welcomed my going to Hyderabad and that if the Nizam acceded the Government of India would do all in its power to accord him full physical protection. In my briefing the possibility has not been overlooked that he is no longer master in his own house and that some smooth and secret Palace revolution has been or is about to be put into effect.

After the Defence Committee I saw Nehru again and drove off with him to receive further guidance. He said he wished only to make some general observations with regard to my visit. His philosophy in the matter was that to try to avoid trouble was often the best way of inviting it. It was not possible to go on just watching shooting incidents and other disorders that were taking place daily on the Hyderabad border.

After leaving Nehru I returned at once to Government House to find V. P. still with Mountbatten. They seemed quite pleased with the Defence Committee which had been discursive but had enabled the military and political leaders to form a more sympathetic understanding of each other's viewpoint. Mountbatten professes himself to be optimistic about my mission. It was agreed that I should go completely under the auspices of the Hyderabad Government. At five o'clock I went round to Hyderabad House for a further talk with Zain and his son Ali Khan. Zain's plea was: If only the Government of India would not press too hard all would be well.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Friday 14th May 1948*

I have had a final run through with Zain. I am to be the personal guest of Mir Laskar Ali. No exact time limit has been set for the trip. It is agreed that I should be free to decide on the spot but Zain himself hopes to reach Hyderabad before I leave it.

The letter I am conveying to the Nizam expresses disappointment at His Exalted Highness's refusal of the invitation to visit Delhi and doubt as to whether it will be physically possible apart from other considerations for Mountbatten to come to Hyderabad in the limited time now left to him. However Mountbatten writes: Before I leave I am most anxious to establish some form of contact with you over and above the formal negotiations and exchange of letters.

I am then duly introduced as one who has by now served with Mountbatten longer than any other member of his personal staff and who has been throughout intimately acquainted with all the high level developments in his Commands particularly during this present appointment. He knows my mind completely and enjoys my fullest confidence. I may say Mountbatten concludes that I have been extremely disturbed by reports have been reaching Delhi with regard both to the





light brown cotton socks lying loosely about his ankles. He wore a brown fez which was perched on the back of his head. He is a small man with a pronounced stoop his mouth is loose and his teeth are in a deplorable condition. His hands shook and while talking he fidgeted and knocked his knees together in such a way as to give the observer the impression of incipient palsy or St Vitus dance. But his whole personality is held together by the intensity of his expression and the vehemence of his high pitched voice.

I could not ascertain whether the Prime Minister proposed to stay or leave for the interview but on presenting Mountbatten's letter to the Nizam which he opened and read slowly an opportunity clearly presented itself for him to see me alone if he wanted to but he quite deliberately refused to take it and Mir Laik Ali stayed stolidly on. Having read the letter the Nizam turned on me quite fiercely and said that he was well aware of Lord Mountbatten's limited time and powers out here. What could he hope to do in a month? he asked. He said that he trusted that Lord Mountbatten had clearly understood that it was quite impossible for him the Nizam to leave Hyderabad and if Lord Mountbatten was not free to come and see him well then (and he gave a gesture of farewell) he was sorry for it and would say good bye and God speed to him.

The Nizam said that as far as his relations with the Government of India were concerned they had his terms. He acted through his Prime Minister and his Constitutional Adviser and he had nothing more he could say to any other party even on a private basis. I said that Lord Mountbatten was naturally deeply concerned to do all in his power to achieve a settlement before he left but time was short and it was for His Exalted Highness to consider whether there was any way in which the Governor General's good offices could be used. He was I believed aware of Lord Mountbatten's general approach to the problem and if there were any points of detail or emphasis that I could fill in I would be only too happy to do so.

I referred to the special status that Mountbatten had had in effecting the Standstill Agreement. That is all over now he replied. I tried tactfully to explain how Mountbatten believed accession or its equivalent was in the Nizam's best interests but he dismissed the whole subject with a wave of the hand. Laik Ali intervened at this point to say that he would be quite ready to take a plebiscite on the issue if only it could be organised peacefully but the law and order problem involved in carrying it out had compelled him to turn it down to which the Nizam added. Quite right quite right.

I was unable to draw him out on the question of his reaction to the Communist threat in Hyderabad. It was he said a matter of detail which you can discuss with my Prime

He said that the fact and policy of the other Princes in India were no concern of his and that he regarded them merely as noble men to whom some courtesies were due.

The remainder of the interview was largely devoted to the Nizam giving me a lecture in forcible terms on the Muslim philosophy of life the basis of which was that our ends are appointed. He remembered discussing this matter with Lord and the British Resident who at that time was an atheist and he held some opinion as to the effect that there was a measure of chance in our lives and a narrow one.

It was the Nizam's wish whether he had a good or a bad fate. He said that it might be to die in the next ten or thirty days. I might get better later on he could not say. But he was paid for his services and he was satisfied. He then asked me if I had heard of Mir Hurrām, the Muslim Calender and I replied politely that I had. Ah he said but you do not know him. He then mentioned the death of the Prophet and on that subject accepted defeat and loss as an inevitable part of our fate. (In this respect it should be noted that the Nizam is deeply attached to the grave of his mother every evening to sleep.)

On returning to the subject of Mountbatten inter alia the survival of the Nizam dynasty I explained that Mountbatten was a firm believer in constitutional monarchy to which the Nizam took me up and said vehemently that is where I join issue with him. Constitutional monarchy may be all very well in Europe and the rest of the world but not in the East.

The negotiation was terminated by Mir Lakshmi Kishore Komarowalji. The Nizam was interested in knowing how much of India remained within the Commonwealth. I said that this matter was very much under consideration at the moment and that there were different forces to be considered that India should stay. At this point I said I could perhaps make an observation which had no relation to my being a member of Lord Mountbatten's staff which was that whether India remained within or went out of the Commonwealth was represented by the present Government, would be most averse to on part of the Indian Government being more favourable to treatment than a rather simply as a result of Commonwealth membership. Any calculation made on this basis would I assure be illusory. This point I think we take home.

After a few general remarks on the troubled world situation and the Nizam's expression of concern over the developments in Palestine the conversation ended with him conveying his most cordial compliments and wishes to Mountbatten.

The interview which lasted nearly an hour was not particularly easy on to handle in view of the Nizam's somewhat disconcerting appearance and manner but a providing an

portunity to study his personality and mind it was revealing. Although he may be physically decrepit he is obviously mentally alert and in full command of his faculties. I was in fact left with the impression that I had been spoken to by an eccentric elderly Professor on his special subject. He is a Prince of the old school—arrogant and narrow but on his home ground formidable. His mood throughout was one of aggressive fatalism.

I saw no evidence of the Nizam being a prisoner. There was quite a large number of police at the entrance and by the road but there is nothing abnormal in this bearing in mind the attempt on the Nizam's life in the autumn and the lack of any real frontage to King Kothi which was not much farther off the main road than an ordinary house in Delhi. Mir Laik Ali incidentally stayed on after I left.

On my return to the Prime Minister's residence Moin came round to see me.

We discussed treaty or accession and Moin indicated that what they really feared was that accession might be changed so that it meant in fact accession not on three but thirty three subjects involving uniformity of laws and loss of internal autonomy which the Nizam would never give up. Moin also gave me to understand that the free movement of Indian Defence Forces through Hyderabad territory would be unacceptable.

I then left to dine with Munshi. I may say that travelling in a fast car it took me forty minutes to reach Munshi's house which is at the far end of Secunderabad fairly near the air field. In this place he is of course completely out of touch with the life of the city and can only see those who have the time, petrol or political inclination to visit him.

I found him somewhat baffled and depressed. He said that he had lost faith in Mir Laik Ali as the result of what he termed a completely bogus report the latter had given of an interview he had had with him. He told me that the position as between Moin and Laik Ali was somewhat ambiguous. Although they were brothers in law they did not see eye to eye but Laik was definitely on the crest of the wave as far as influence with the Nizam was concerned.

Munshi said that he did not think that anybody meant business either with regard to responsible government or to accession but he agreed with the preliminary view I had formed that the Nizam was politically master of the situation. I reassured him that my trip was personal and informal and that I had come with the full knowledge and approval of the Prime Minister and V. P. He seemed quite happy to return to Bangalore to-morrow morning saying that his wife no longer liked living in this place and that his relations with the Government were so that he had virtually lost all contact with them.

HYDERABAD Sunday 16th May 1948

I have completed a crowded day talking and being talked to in unending flow. I told Mir Laik Ali that it would certainly be interesting to meet Khasm Razvi privately if there was no publicity for the meeting and to understand that I was only seeing people whom he himself particularly wanted me to see. He replied that he would definitely like me to meet Razvi and that the latter would be calling on him this morning prior to a tour he was making. I was advised to drop in.

I did so and for fifteen minutes I sat and talked the Prime Minister left me alone with Razvi. In my penning marks I said something about feeling depressed at the situation of affairs which had at once led to the fact that he was not but did press that he was just desperate. He wished me to understand that his sole purpose was the defence of the Moslems to whom only did he owe loyalty. I asked him whether there was any truth in the report that the Communists had been propping up the Razakars with a view to a common action. When you say the Razakars Razvi replied very fleetingly you mean me. I told you the condition of the Moslem here is such that they are themselves rapidly becoming Communist. I have warned them (he did not indicate exactly what this meant) that this was likely to happen.

He then angrily asserted that he was quite prepared to work with the Communist and had taken preliminary action to that end. To make doubly sure that I had not misunderstood him I said that I perceived on difficulty in his way would be the direct challenge thrown down by the Communists to the Nizam himself—so the Communists warning that there was to be no truck with the Nizam. Razvi paused for a moment and said that he appreciated the difficulty but later when I turned to the subject he made it quite clear that both the dynasty and the Government were ready for consideration to him if the Communist proved to be the only ones he could use to save the Moslim from destruction. If only India will leave us alone for two years I promise that I will create something they will envy. Hindus already are joining the Razakar. I asked whether about a political settlement there might not be the same crisis at the end of two years and all he could say was yes but he added that for one thing he did not believe that the Indian Union would last for more than two years.

He said that he had a belief in expectation of a peaceable solution and shared a great deal of racial hatred and disliking the Hindu. He thought that Gandhi's death as a symbol of the rebirth of the Hindu always killed the gods that make them into super-gods. I asked him whether he did not consider that the Communist satellites organised were predominantly Hindu. He said that that was a bit but that they were less communally minded than the other parties.

I said that it was widely held that he was the real strong man in the State and asked him what his views were on that. He said: Don't believe all the slanderous reports about me as a wire puller and maker of Governments. I am the least person here. I am simply the champion and servant of the Moslems' cause on behalf of which I will stop at nothing. The Government call me in for my views on occasion which I give to them with complete frankness. He told me that to save Moslems from death and Moslem women from being ravished he was ready to die. The Congress representatives in Hyderabad were men of straw. Let me look after the Hindus, he said smiling for the first time.

Razvi is the complete fanatic. He stares with eyes that bore holes into you and would strike terror into his friends and enemies were it not for a streak of absurdity and charlatanism about him which even while he rants gives him away making it difficult to take him completely seriously and conveying the firm impression that his megalomania has far out-run his real power. In appearance he is slight and dapper, sporting a beard of Mack Sennett proportions beneath a fez worn at a rakish angle. As he walked briskly away he looked like a blend of Charlie Chaplain and a minor Prophet.

Having disposed of Razvi, my next appointment was with General El Edroos, the Commander in Chief of the Hyderabad Army, a tall handsome and I can well believe very able officer of Hashemite Arab stock. He served in the field in the Burma campaign under command of Mountbatten for whom incidentally he has the highest respect. He said that there was some trouble in the Sholapur area that Indian troops had been helping ruffians to make their way over the border and that Indian aircraft had been making reconnaissances. He was writing to Bucher and Elmhirst\* privately on this subject. He referred to the ordinance position. He said he had made a frank offer to Himmat Singh† (without of course conceding him any right of inspection) to see things for himself which he had done and he understood that he had been satisfied. He said that the Communists were very well armed and that the economic blockade was virtually complete.

He stressed the intensity of the political suspicions of both sides and said that although he was a soldier he could not help asking why the Central Government were pressing so hard. I said that he must appreciate that with the creation of Pakistan a strong Centre for the Indian Union was essential. Cannot

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\* General Sir Roy Bucher and Air Marshal Sir Thomas Elmhirst, Commanders in Chief of the Indian Army and Air Force respectively.

† General Himmat Singh, Indian Army Adviser on States.

they said he said that Pakistan was the r own m king and th t the p ure they ar putti g n here cau ng a cri s a d a ou ing Moslem fanatic m? With t this pre s re he went on (he clea ly as referr ng to M sh) Hyde bad in my vi would ha e fallen l ke r pe plum He said that nov s s rious p siti n w s grov ng up y h li was tak ng m re a d mo the forma f gue lla cti ty I d I had just se n Razv and that he vas phy cally smaller than I h d xpect d El Edro s v ho something f a g t himself repli d ith a lugh It th I tll one that a li ngerous

I ent straght fr m mv talk w th Gen ral El Edro s for a very long ss n with the Pr me M nister We had lunch to ther al ne nd talk d for almo t t hou s

Mir Laik Al began by explaining th t he was putting forw rd p oposals f r rep se tat go crmm nt H ould not just get rd of the Legisl ti m Ass mbly so he h d in m d to st n mot n electo l pr d re f r Constituent As mbly to be lected n dd t n t it (I s ume ult m tely to super ede t) He a d th t he h d d scussed the matt r v th the lader of all part s and he l t t them the cho ce of th el ct ral p ocedure they v h d t ad pt which v th r to use the ex sting voca ton l r il (clearly h a ly gh ted n f v r f the M slems) or t make a f sh el t al l st the pr pa ation of whi h to gether with the onduct of th el ct on it elf could not n his v w t k les th n gh teen m nth

H sa d th t h s d i mm w s th t the Congre s boycott of the n w t y r ld Leg lat As mbly m nt that he had lterally nothing b t the r own word t g on for the pol tal bass of the r popul r pport They we e not he pointed ut, l ke the Congre s lsewhere whi h w s genuinely elected befor t carr ed ut ts boycott pol cy He s d he was a sting the reacti n f the part s nd hop s t make an an o nement by the end of th s m nth

He th m repeated Moins v ew on the acc ssi n ss m nd a d that hi basi obje tion v a that ther w re not just three sub j cts but that und m thos he d gs ther v e n n ty on n ll s defined under the Ind an Co stituton He sa d that the i tern l ident ty of Hyderabad would s uredly be blotted out If therefore fa our d a pe al taty which would be e clu e t Ind a and whi l ould n lud a comm n Fo eign pol cy m defence agreement Hyderabad ha ng n rmy of tenty f e thousand s m ten th usand of v h ch v o ld be put at the d s pol of the Ind n Un a d c mmuniation agreement in which he fore w n special d fficulty

I t ld him the form taken by my intervie th R zv a d asked him for his reactions He told me that he thought Razv mu t ha e meant that h ould ally h mself w th th Comm nists only as a v ry last resort nd after the collapse of the N zam

and Government I replied that this was not clear from what Razvi had said to me and told him that if Razvi were to go unchecked much longer the Nizam and the Government might find themselves literally as the nut in the nut cracker.

This conversation did not represent any major advance so far as I know on any of the previous views Laik Ali has held either on responsible government or secession.

At 1.30 I went round to General El Edroos house for a second talk. He told me that one of the reasons why the Nizam had refused to come to Delhi was the fear that he would not be able to get back and that I might well be advised to check on this. He pointed out Hyderabad's strategic importance. While recognising their military weakness he said that should the worst happen they could and would cut off India from the South. He believed an agreement was possible if the politicians allowed a Treaty giving India control in External Affairs administration over Defence and Communications. What more could they want? he asked. If India pressed this matter too far he went on resistance was certain. Scott had said this as well.

*HYDERABAD Monday 17th May 1948*

At 8 p.m. I had a last talk with the Prime Minister. I told Laik Ali that I wanted to be sure that the Nizam's refusal to visit Delhi was not based on any fears as to his personal security. He said that there might have been some such doubt in the Nizam's mind but that the dominating and compelling motive was that if he had come his move would have been seriously misunderstood in the State. I told him that I had been frankly worried by the reliance that seemed to be placed on Opposition support in England. I said that I was sure that this was a most dangerous illusion. For Hyderabad to become a Party issue in the British House of Commons could not serve the real interests of the State. Laik Ali told me that he entirely agreed. He personally had the greatest admiration for Mr Attlee and he did not want Hyderabad to be bandied about in Party debate anywhere. He said that he was not pleased that I had made the visit which he felt had been helpful in every way.

*After I had had a quiet dinner with Zain's son and beautiful daughter in law Zain himself who had arrived that afternoon asked to see me and I went along to his house at 11 p.m. He said that he had seen the Nizam alone. He had again been very vehement. But added Zain he always is. He was very firm on the issue of his Legislative Sovereignty but Zain had told him that it was quite essential for him to form a new Government on a much broader basis than the present one. He gave me to understand that the Nizam and Laik Ali had at last agreed to do this. The Nizam then apparently raised the question of my interview saying that he had spoken exactly*



as in his mind to me without any reservations. The Nizam believed that there was a ten per cent chance that Mountbatten would even come himself and asked Zaidi what he felt. Zaidi said that it must be to some extent dependent on the kind of report I sent in. The Nizam then began to ask questions about me. What exactly was I, what were my politics etc.

Zaidi thinks that solution is possible if the Legislative Service Commission is made. He even went in as far as to feel that the Commission might be brought but his proposal in his talks with the Nizam on Tuesday and Wednesday (the Nizam had asked him to stay and have an evening day for an extra talk) to see if this would be acceptable provided it was strictly limited to three subjects. He said that he was proposing to speak frankly with El Edroos who was alleged to be going militarily as stance to the Razakar. This was causing considerable disquiet in Delhi. Finally Zaidi hoped that I would be able to postpone my visit to Simla until he got back on Thursday evening when I could give Mountbatten the latest information.

HYDERABAD NEW DELHI Tuesday 18th May 1948

After an early breakfast and a final courtesy good bye to Mr Lakshmi I accompanied by Captain Baig on the long drive to the field. Captain Baig, a tall, thin ADC has been fully tested and he has been to endle in steering me from place to place on time throughout my fantastic schedule. I leave the knowledge of everything possible has been done to throw open the gates to me. From the Nizam downward I get the impression that everything has been spoken with the maximum frankness of which he is capable and that he has been surprisingly frank. If Dhanu Var Jung as yet he was at least receptive. As for my contribution I hope and believe that I may have been instrumental in tempering the general desire for glory attitude. If I did not my share.

The return flight that afternoon was my first chance to compose my thoughts. My main impressions are —

The Nizam is the key man in the situation. As regards the major issue of relations with the India Union nothing is being done without his personal concurrence. Moreover, I consider that any agreement be finally entered into will be honoured in the sense that his government is strong enough to withstand internal opposition from any quarter.

He is in a mood of aggressive fatalism and in my judgment is ready and has the strength to try to perform a Samson Act on the Government of India in other words if he goes under full preparations have been made to ensure that the political and social structure of the State should go under with him. Razvi's role in this scheme of things to ensure that this pro-

cess of disintegration is completed and that a mere military victory will not suffice to solve the problem

On the other hand the Nizam is searching furtively and anxiously for an honourable settlement. He is a ruler of the old school; he has no liking for the trappings of the Constitutional Monarch and will put up the same kind of resistance to that status as Queen Victoria did. The tighter the corner the more he will fall back on prerogatives. I do not believe that he will voluntarily accept an accession solution which makes him any thing other than the official fountain head of law and custom inside his own State.

Any appreciation of the Nizam's attitude must take into account that the prospects and policy of his fellow Princes do not interest him at all—he regards them merely as impotent noble men—and that he is obviously a deeply religious man. In times of trouble the Nizam is liable to lean heavily on his traditional Islamic beliefs and I am sure he spoke to me with complete sincerity on this.

In this political bargaining no great advance has been made since Laik Ali's speech to the Hyderabad Legislative Assembly on 27th April. It seems likely however that the Nizam will take a final stand both on the accession and the representative Government issues by the 1st June.

With regard to Mountbatten's position there is a very wide spread feeling that the only chance of a settlement will be through his good offices and influence. But the Nizam is clearly sceptical whether either can turn the scales in time. A position however may conceivably be reached in the course of the next fortnight in which the differences of detail and interpretation are narrowed down sufficiently for Mountbatten to provide the final pressure. For the moment there is no more to be done with the Nizam; the differences need to be ironed out between Zain and V. P.

## CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT

### FAREWELL PHASE

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Thursday 20th May 1948*  
I SPENT ALL yesterday cut off from the world in a stern effort to complete my report for Mountbatten to read a day in advance of my own arrival in Simla.

This afternoon I had an hour's interview with Nehru and ran through my general conclusions with him. He considers that the Nizam may have been deliberately giving me the works and in view of his refusal to enter into any discussion with—

tional parties he would naturally rely on generalities. He agreed with me that Deen Yar Jung has as the real founder of the Razakars as the trigger which set off the complications of disbanding them.

The Prime Minister said that the history of Hyderabad was not glorious and that they had nearly always given way to pressure, citing their collapse before the Mahattas.

He realised that the Nizam's government was generally concerned about his treasures and personal property and was ready to give concessions on these. He said he had no intention of forcing accessions on them of the Indian Constitution in Hyderabad. Any further subjects would be a matter of separate negotiation. Nor had he any intention of bringing up the Hyderabad Army.

He emphasised that the Nizam's religion and said that his emphasis on Mohurims was talk with me as significant as it commemorated the event which marks the break between the Shia and Sunni Sects of the Moslem faith. The Hyderabads were Sunni Muslims and it was expected that the Nizam himself was a crypto Shia.

I said I hoped he had not been unduly disturbed by the publicity and emphasised that it was primarily due to the zeal of Mr. H. H. I had said my bet to keep it under control (I understood there was much criticism from members of the Cabinet but it did not come from Nehru or Patel who were not worried). Nehru said against this fact that it did not matter or affect the life of the State.

Nehru says he finds the Nizam's attitude hard to understand as he does not believe that he is at all cut out for a hereditary role.

After some initial uncertainty as to whether they were going to meet Zaidi and V. P. Singh at 9 pm and I joined them later afterwards.

With the background of general border tension V. P. Singh was strongly of the opinion that the present uncertainty cannot be allowed to linger on and that the tentative programmes had been considered and rejected a complicated sequence of meetings as ordered in the original invitation to Mr. Lakshmi to come to Delhi on the 2nd and a visit by Nehru and V. P. to Patel in Mysore and Mountbatten's participation at a decision-making point: the decisions and in due course of firm decisions.

The conversation although somewhat incoherent and partial was frank and candid. The gravity of the situation was emphasised in the light of border incidents and the Sardars' case. Zaidi himself gave an indication whatever of the Nizam's attitude on any of the main subjects under discussion but V. P. repeated him in the limitation of accession to the subjects—a youth more to be negotiated the identity and integrity of the Hyderabad Army and the Nizam's legislative powers. (The last is a most tricky constitutional and political issue on which we will

need to brief ourselves carefully) Laik's position and the re-constitution of the Government were considered. Zain stressed the difficulty of Laik dismissing the whole Cabinet except himself and re-forming it but this matter will be frankly discussed at the forthcoming meeting. The possibility of Zain himself taking part in the new Government was considered. He said he would prefer to serve as Deputy to someone else but was ready to co-operate provided his appointment came from the Nizam direct and not as a result of pressure from the Government of India.

Zain seemed to feel that V P's proposals on all these subjects were being made in a more palatable form than before but so far as I know there was no change of ground on the Indian side. V P however spoke in the most fervent and emotional terms of his esteem for Zain and of his wish for settlement and the understanding that clearly exists between the two men is encouraging. The situation now largely revolves round the Mussoori meeting with Patel and the measure of discretion V P can get from that meeting. V P anticipates that it will be no easy encounter.

Both V P and Zain were good enough to say that my visit to Hyderabad had been helpful.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S LODGE SIMLA *Saturday 22nd May 1948*

To complete this crowded week Fay and I set off on our last trek to Simla. The Mountbattens and nearly all the Staff have been here ever since the beginning of my Hyderabad trip. So much has happened since I left and I have been so absorbed in my own activities that it seems almost like a return from exile.

I have had two long talks with Mountbatten alone. He says he only wishes now that he had sent me down earlier as the value of my report to him is in its objectivity. He has found it very hard in view of his own friendship for Monckton and his personal desire to achieve a settlement before he leaves to avoid a subjective approach to the problem. In this connexion I gave him my frank opinion that the Nizam may well be placing more reliance on C R—a Southern Indian and a Madrassi—than on himself as Governor General. Mountbatten was not worried about the Nizam's negative attitude. The vital objective of stirring up a sense of urgency among the ruling group in Hyderabad and of causing a renewal of negotiations has, he feels, been secured. For he says until I went neither side seemed prepared to make a new move.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Tuesday 25th May 1948*

I left Simla on Sunday morning with Vernon after little than thirty six hours there. I am surfeited with travel.

logistics of my last week are a serious challenge to constructive or sustained thought. We returned to the furnace in Delhi and advance guards to Mountbatten, who has spent the last two to four hours in Patala. We were able to advise him in arrival that Mr Laik Ali, who reached here on Sunday, has apparently come in completely the wrong spirit and is so out of touch with reality that he claims that the crisis is now past. Mountbatten therefore got to work on him today in what I believe is the longest interview he has had with anybody in the entire month—five hours in all.

Mountbatten began by giving him with brutal frankness a picture of what would probably happen if no settlement was reached and Hindu blood began to flow in Hyderabad. If after his departure in a few weeks India is to decide upon armed intervention on what could be done by the Hyderabad army? Laik Ali said he fully appreciated the military position but that he considered acceptance ten times worse than paramountcy. He pointed out that while he was personally in favour of democratic institutions, he was opposed to the introduction of responsible government in Hyderabad simply because it would lead to no better results. When V.P. entered the room Laik Ali proposed a long-term agreement for five years covering the three principal subjects.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Wednesday 26th May 1948*

Discussion between V.P. and Laik Ali *ad hoc* went on faintly all the night. V.P. with his prodigious powers of drafting and formula-finding has produced a comprehensive Head of Agreement. They are divided into two parts and cover eleven principal terms. Part I dealing with the basic relation between Hyderabad and India and Part II with the interim measures to implement Part I. V.P.'s Heads of Agreement met Laik Ali's request to be able to present to the Nizam a third alternative to acceptance which ruled out anything and a plebiscite.

Mountbatten himself is strongly of the opinion that a plebiscite would be the best solution as the Heads of Agreement open up nothing depressing or a protracted and niggling negotiation. However, Laik Ali's personal view would seem to be in the same sense for he said that he thought a plebiscite would save the face of both sides. At the Indian end the plebiscite finds favour in particular with Patel whose blessing is indispensable even though there is no agreement that it would not automatically lead to a cessation.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI *Saturday 29th May 1948*

This is the most critical moment in the tentative Hyderabad negotiations. V.P. has been to see Patel at Mussoorie and has returned from him with a constructive but strongly worded message.

sage Patel comes down once more in favour of the plebiscite. As for the Heads of Agreement, he accepts the basic relationship in Part I without amendment, but would tighten up the interim measures of Part II by shifting the balance of control more in favour of the non Moslems. The final paragraph of Patel's message written in his own hand urges that if Liaq Ali means business he should come up with plenipotentiary powers from the Nizam. It is no use, he writes, discussing with a person who has to go back every time for instructions.

He wants a telegram with a twenty four hour time limit to be sent saying that if Liaq Ali cannot return with authority and agreement on the fundamentals within that deadline the Government of India would draw the conclusion that Hyderabad do not want to continue the negotiations and are merely playing for time. His last words are finalise within a week. Nehru has expressed great distrust of Liaq Ali. Intelligence about his activities confirms that we are dealing with a very sly procrastinator but his—or the Nizam's—response cannot be delayed much longer.

On the credit side is Monckton's decision to come out again. Mountbatten has expressed his delight at the news saying that he will try to hold the position until his arrival but pointing out that powerful influences—growing stronger every day—are at work militating against the settlement which they both want.

Monckton however is not due in India until the 3rd June which happens to be the day when I and my family are due to leave Bombay by sea for home. It is thus possible for Monckton's and my paths to cross in Bombay on the morning of the 3rd without undue administrative inconvenience or danger of breach of confidence. As Monckton is arranging to fly straight on to Hyderabad and has not been fully in the picture on the developments during the period of my own visit onwards Mountbatten sees in my presence a providential opportunity to brief him before he is called upon to give what may be the decisive advice to the Nizam. So there will be no fading away for me until I am finally aboard the ship.

This evening there was a farewell Staff party to Fay and myself in the Panelled Room. We do not actually leave until Tuesday morning but this was the only time that the Mountbattens could come and characteristically they wished to be there. It was a very pleasant family affair. I am very sorry to be leaving before the final curtain. I would have liked to have been present for the *denouement* over Hyderabad and to have witnessed the series of ceremonies of formal farewell which I am sure will burst the bounds of formality. But there it is. The phase-out programme was arranged some time back and it would be very difficult to amend our plans. During the party there was much—

amusement in my alleged likeness to a large portrait on the wall of the renowned Tipoo Sahib. The picture shows a man of small and almost morose countenance and the comparison did little to raise my morale.

Afterwards Mountbatten presented me with a silver cigarette box generously inscribed. We were much moved by these tokens of confidence, appreciation and friendship. For myself my biggest reward has been the privilege of seeing a great man on a great mission.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE NEW DELHI *Sunday 30th May 1948*

We had this evening been to a large reception given by V. P. at the Delhi Gymkhana Club which attracted so far as I could see nearly every celebrity in Delhi. For the Mountbattens it is the first in a formidable sequence of farewells parties during the next three weeks. Through the middle of the milling throng a man was brought in no finer than the letters from the Nizam which immediately absorbed the attention of most principal guests and Prime Minister. Most of the Indian and Foreign Press were present and it did not take these intelligence experts long to recognize that important advice from a reliable informant had come through. Mountbatten, Nehru and V. P. moving into a corner put the r heads together and talked in anxious undertone.

At first sight it would seem that hope of settlement under Mountbatten appears to have received a severe setback. In the first letter the Nizam's reaction to the Head of Agreement was simply that he could do no more than wait. Mountbatten's reply in the second he returned a brusque note to the direct suggestion that he might consider appointing a new and more acceptable Prime Minister—a suggestion which L. K. Ali himself with what degree of candour it is difficult to say had expressed himself as ready to sponsor if it would serve the cause of good will. The third is simply renewed invitation to Mountbatten to visit him in Hyderabad. Here again the terms of the invitation are singularly lacking in warmth or even courtesy of expression. Mountbatten decided—wisely I think—to reply only to the first letter expressing regret at further delay and the hope that when L. K. Ali comes to Delhi the next time he would be allowed to bring with him plenipotentiary powers to reach a settlement.

In addition to these deplorable notes a negation from the Nizam. L. K. Ali has weighed in denying the accuracy of V. P.'s notes on his meeting with Mountbatten. Nehru and V. P. on the 26th and asserting that he had never agreed to India's declaration of right to overriding legislation in the three central subjects. Everyone in the room at the time however is quite certain that he did agree. This latter only seems to reinforce Nehru's warning

that Laik Ali is not to be trusted and that his sole objective is to delay matters. Monckton's intervention assumes hourly more decisive importance.

In spite of the current tension Zain Yar Jung creates calmness and confidence with dinner parties at Hyderabad House. Almost our last engagement before leaving was to dine with him and his family and entourage. As we sat out in the gardens after dinner one of the Hyderabad ladies exchanging polite conversation put such small items as Standstill Agreements, Instruments of Accession and Paramountcy into their proper perspective. Delhi she sighed is not what it was. There are no Moghul Emperors now.<sup>1</sup>

M V CALEDONIA Thursday 3rd June 1948

As my last official duty before boarding the ship I reported back to Mountbatten by telegram that Monckton at the outset was clearly in a state of doubt and despondency and unaware of the by now crucial importance of his advice in swaying events favourably. He felt the chances of the Nizam agreeing to any thing were a hundred to seven against and if he was over pushed he himself was ready to suggest that he should fight it out. I stressed the reality of the political tension and the urgency of the time factor and was able to say that I had left him in a much more constructive and hopeful frame of mind than I had found him.

Monckton urged that he must have time to handle the Nizam in his own way for he was hardly ever susceptible to direct assault in one interview. However if and when a point of decision was really reached he would come to Delhi immediately. After advising him of Mountbatten's and Patel's support for a plebiscite I was relieved to hear that he had already of his own accord arrived at a conclusion firmly in favour of this solution. He thinks that the Nizam's sharp reply about Laik Ali's possible replacement as touching his prerogatives might have been the outcome of some mishandling in the original transmission of the proposal. Monckton intends to tackle this problem himself and considers Zain to be the only feasible alternative.

Apart from the customs interruption I was well satisfied with this meeting. It helped to confirm my own belief that in politics much turns on the art of being available in the right place at the right time. Monckton for his part said he was most grateful for it as he confessed that while it would not have been desirable for him to stop off at Delhi first on this visit he would have been at a disadvantage in going straight into the Nizam wholly unbriefed on the situation from the Indian end.



LONDON *W dn day 23 d June 1948*

We reached Liverpool yesterday after twenty days at sea. The cyclone duly met us one hundred and fifty miles out of Bombay and remained till half the way to Aden. I was back just in time to watch the Mountbatten and all the rest of the party touch down at Northolt the same day. They have taken them forty-eight hours by air.

Both the Duke of Edinburgh and Mr Attlee were at the airport to meet this homecoming. The unique distinction for I doubt whether Royal Duke and Prime Minister of the day have been present together before to greet a Viceroy or Governor-General on his return. The other Ministers, high officials and senior officers of BBC News and Press representative next to me in the photograph in large numbers and I think at least a Guard of Honour of hundred Indian sailors from the new crew of the *Dharmapala* which is still in Portmouth.

Attlee's presence is a particularly appropriate for the transfer of power in India. My will be regarded as the moment of policy decision of his Premiership. In its conception and implementation he has through it carried a special responsibility. The history will undoubtedly link Attlee and Mountbatten much the same way as the Moley and Minto Montagu and Chelmsford.

While we were all in the atmosphere of Mountbatten's discussion of the Hyderabad situation with the Prime Minister called me over to say a few words about the impressions I had formed of the Nizam on my visit. Mr Attlee listened and carefully to the brief picture I drew, then said that he was quite satisfied that everything had more or less been done to our

honourable settlement for the Nizam and that we could all go away with clear consciences on the matter. I did not as yet know the details of the breakdown, but only heard of the intermission of the ships' radio that attempts to reach an agreement had failed.

It is going to be thought that the Mountbatten and the Staff party who for the past fifteen months have worked in such close cooperation are dispersing for the first time. They are intensely young, in the voice of great events, the order to start break away and accept normalcy is yours. As they go into the soft summer months of it will be like a spell of life if only to learn over again how to cope with the daily round of the routine pace.

LONDON *Monday 28th Jn 1948*

In spite of the lures and distractions of Bradman's farewell Test Match at Lord's I have now had time to put together the drama of Mountbatten's last three weeks in India. The ships' radio had reported only the briefest statement of the Hyderabad breakdown together with short reports of Mountbatten's final

broadcast and some indication that the farewell scenes in Delhi had been no less heart warming than those of the 15th August and in many ways even more remarkable, in so far as they were now simply expressions of personal gratitude to the Mountbattens.

From long talks I have had with Ronnie and Vernon and one or two with Mountbatten himself since their return and from notes which were maintained right up to the day of their departure it would seem that the course of events after my meeting with Monckton was briefly as follows.

Monckton stayed for three days in Hyderabad returning with Laik Ali to Delhi. At first the discussions were stormy and the negotiations more than once on the verge of complete collapse. Nehru refused to see Laik Ali. Monckton threatened to leave for home. Mountbatten at one point saved the day by telephoning Nehru to say he was quite sure he could find a satisfactory solution when in fact he had no idea how or where to seek it. But somehow a life line was maintained. Nehru made a helpful speech on the 8th June posing and answering the question for his critics as to why the Indian Army had not already marched in. He replied that whenever force was employed it created more problems than it solved. The storm subsided and Mountbatten was left with effective control over the negotiations.

Monckton for his part recognised that something more than a long term plebiscite was required to restore the situation. Patel from his sick bed still wanted unqualified acceptance of accession. He now urged that no more formulæ should be provided from the Indian side. This was acceptable to Monckton who put up two documents—a draft Firman to introduce responsible government, establish a Constituent Assembly early in 1949 and reconstitute immediately the existing Government. The second document was the first part of V P's Heads of Agreement in full. Laik Ali once again played for time saying he must return to the Nizam. On the 9th June rumours reached Delhi that a Pakistan representative was in Hyderabad but Laik Ali denied this on oath and agreement was reached that he should return to Hyderabad for consultation.

On the 12th June Monckton reported getting the proposals past the Nizam and through the Executive Council except for two points—the issue of overriding legislation and the composition of the Constituent Assembly. This led to further difficult discussions first between Mountbatten, Monckton and Nehru in Delhi and then at a meeting with Patel and most of the Cabinet at which Mountbatten was present in Mussoori. But the proposals were agreed as modified by the Nizam subject to the deletion of any direct reference to parity in the composition of the Assembly and the substitution instead of the words 'in consultation with the leaders of the major political parties in Hyderabad'.

On the 13th June Monckton strongly urged Lakshmi to come up with plenipotentary powers this time but once again he was humiliated in his discussion both by the Council and the Nizam himself. On the 14th June Lakshmi asked for further new amendments to the Heads of Agreement. These were that the Government of India should only request Hyderabad to pass legislation similar to that in force in India and not peculiar to Hyderabad; secondly that Hyderabad should be allowed to tax land and irrigation and that the Zakat should be disbanded gradually and not all at once and so forth, that the fate of emergency under which India might station troops Hyderabad should be decided under the Government of India Act. Mountbatten felt there was little hope of getting these additional points past the Government of India but much to his pleasure and surprise Nehru was ready to agree.

On the 15th June Mountbatten visited the Hyderabad delegation and reported the unexpected success. Lakshmi at once resumed his own work. He wanted declarations of economic and financial freedom to be included. On 16th June the Government of India agreed to give sympathetic consideration and suggested that these could be stressed in a collateral list. Mountbatten said that on this point Nehru went so far as to propose the inclusion in the collateral letter of proposals for joint collaboration in the economic development of Hyderabad. Lakshmi apparently not realising that he had actually asked for the thing he wanted. Only on Mountbatten's protesting that it would be most unwise for Hyderabad to make such a request after and Mountbatten explaining that it had hitherto only been conducted upon full acceptance and was thus a fair example of good will did Lakshmi withdraw his request. But a Mountbatten pointed out the incident was typical of his exasperating obstinacy at this time.

Lakshmi left Hyderabad with the final document and all the amendments. Monckton stressed upon him the need now for total acceptance or total refusal. An answer was not given at 7.30 though the meeting but no message came through until 9.40 when the Nizam rejected his inability to give a final word without taking the opinion of the Council. This was a physically not possible until the next day. The delay was accepted in Delhi.

On the 16th at noon Mountbatten and Monckton were informed that the Nizam had been recommended not to accept the proposal on four new grounds which Mountbatten did not understand even Monckton could not read so unsatisfiable and ridiculous that it was decided that Monckton should fly down to Hyderabad during the night to read out and under Mountbatten's reply.

His most serious objection as the deletion of the words on basis which I shall cite later in a sub-paragraph of the First man referring to the setting up of the Constituent Assembly. The deletion had already been agreed to by his delegation and had

by no stretch of the imagination be regarded as a major point of substance. Another objection was his unwillingness to allow the economic agreement (which in any case had only been offered by India at the last minute) to be settled by a collateral letter. He now wanted it in the body of the agreement.

By midday on the 17th there was a telephone message from Monckton with the one word 'lost'. By the evening a completely new point had been raised by the Nizam which he had never mentioned before concerning India's right to station troops in the event of emergency. He asked for the negotiations to be continued. Nehru and V. P. waited for Monckton and then held a Press conference releasing the terms that had been made available to the Nizam.

Even now Nehru promised to leave this present offer open for acceptance and impose no time limit. Monckton told Mountbatten that he had been particularly disappointed to find that Liaqat Ali had spent three hours with Razvi before even seeing the Nizam. He also gave his view at an informal Press conference that the so-called blockade of Hyderabad had not been imposed by the central Government and probably not by the Provincial administrations either but rather by the individual action of low level officials.

Mountbatten now withdrew officially from the negotiations but made one last effort in a long persuasive telegram, a revised 'left barrel' which was supplemented by a message from Monckton. Both told him to have the courage of his convictions and not allow himself to sacrifice the interests of his State at the behest of the Ittehad clique. The Ittehad extremists made it quite clear that they were not prepared to enter into any concessions which would limit their control over the State and when it came to the crisis the Nizam lacked the will to assert himself against this group.

Mountbatten feels that the main reason for failure is that the principals on either side have never been able to get together throughout the entire eleven months of negotiation and he is still confident that if the Nizam had come to Delhi and he could have acted as mediator agreement could have been reached. Similarly if the Hyderabad delegation had had more negotiating powers and ability to appreciate Monckton's magnificent negotiating skill and fundamental personal loyalty to his client the Nizam the outcome might well have been favourable.

The prolonged Hyderabad negotiations with their crescendo in the last two weeks of his term of office made it impossible for Mountbatten to effect any last minute act of mediation over Kashmir. In March he had secured the agreement of the two Prime Ministers to meet each other at roughly monthly intervals. But two months had passed without any action on this and Mountbatten suggested that Nehru should write to Liaquat to

propose a meeting preferably in Delhi which would enable Liaquat to say good bye to Mountbatten before he left. But the attempt had first to be postponed owing to Hyderabad and then abandoned owing to Liaquat's illness.

The ground had been prepared for detailed discussion of various solutions. The Indian Cabinet although very bitter about reports of the participation of large regular Pakistani Army units were still in a comparatively receptive mood for settlement. When Nehru sent detailed opinion of the Pakistani Army's intervention it was significant that Liaquat's reply did not specifically deny the charge but stressed realistically the danger to the security of Pakistan. As the Indian Army approaches the North West Frontier he declared the tribesmen feel directly threatened. It was Mountbatten's opinion that here again the inability of the two principal parties to come together at this particular moment was politically and psychologically most unfortunate.

It frustrated him with the Nizam and the Kashmiris but a mental whet against the Mountbattens' decisive victory over the hearts of the Indian people. The Mountbattens last day in India was a high for all sides a triumph beyond contrivance or imagination. It was a triumph which overwhelmed them with emphasis that Indian people and Government had recognised the meaning of the mission and the sincerity of their efforts and were hailing them liberally and fondly.

There was first of all address by the Delhi Municipality. To receive them they drove through densely packed streets along the Chander Chowk the great highway of Old Delhi down which

Viceroy had paid since the assassination attempt on Har Dayal in 1911. They were mobbed, hounded and garlanded all the way to the Gendagound where a crowd of a quarter of a million had gathered and where a further quarter of a million were trying to gain entrance.

In the evening at the last of the great State banquets given this time by the Cabinet Nehru spoke a memorable term paying a heartfelt tribute to the Mountbattens not forgetting Pamela.

When coming straight from the hospital and possessing all the charm she does a grown-up person took in this troubled scene of India. Of Mountbatten himself he declared: 'You came here sir with a high reputation but my reputation has foundered in India. You lived here through a period of great difficulty and

It is interesting to note that the Mountbattens themselves through out the fifteen months in India carried through on top of all the other activities a prodigious programme of entertainment at Government House which played no small part in the promotion of good will. Altogether they entertained 7605 guests for luncheon, 8313 for dinner and 25287 to garden parties and home and tea parties.

crisis and yet your reputation has not foundered That is a remarkable feat

He next spoke of Lady Mountbatten as possessing the healer's touch Wherever you have gone you have brought solace you have brought hope and encouragement Is it surprising therefore that the people of India should love you and look up to you as one of themselves and should grieve that you are going?

Referring to the wonderful demonstration of friendship and affection by the common people of Delhi four hours before I do not know' Nehru said how Lord and Lady Mountbatten felt on that occasion but used as I am to these vast demonstrations here I was much affected and I wondered how it was that an Englishman and Englishwoman could become so popular in India during this brief period of time A period certainly of achievement and success in some measure but also a period of sorrow and disaster Obviously this was not connected so much with what had happened but rather with the good faith the friendship and the love of India that these two possessed You may have many gifts and presents but there is nothing more real or precious than the love and affection of the people You have seen yourself Sir and Madam how that love and affection work

Mountbatten and Lady Mountbatten visibly moved replied with the eloquence of the heart At the end gifts were exchanged the Government presenting the Mountbattens with an inscribed tray bearing the signatures of all the Governors of the Provinces and Cabinet and Mountbatten handing over on behalf of the King the gold plate presented originally by the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths and Silversmiths to King George V for use in the State dining room of his Viceroy in New Delhi This he did at the King's express wish as a symbol of the friendship of all English men and women and indeed of all the people in the United Kingdom to the people of India After the dinner there was a glittering reception which was attended by no fewer than six thousand guests

Among Lady Mountbatten's last public acts was to visit the two great refugee camps of Kurukshetra and Panipat where some three hundred thousand refugees still shelter One of the Indian A.D.C.s with her reported that he had never visited scenes like it in India The refugees gathered round her in their thousands in tears at saying good bye to her In many other camps refugees collected their pice and annas to buy a railway ticket for one of their members just to carry some small gift to her as token of gratitude

It was at another unique gathering—a dinner given to the Mountbattens by the entire Diplomatic Corps at the



## PRINCIPAL PERSONALITIES

IN THE course of this narrative more than two hundred and fifty names of prominent personalities are mentioned. Many of the references are only incidental and most of them self explanatory. Footnotes have been kept to a minimum. With the coming of Independence the functions and duties of many of the leaders and officials either changed or were terminated. The following are some of the principal *dramatis personæ* with (where applicable) their official position before and after 15th August 1947 (Independence Day) within the period covered by this book. Cross references are provided wherever Christian names or abbreviated titles have been used. It should be noted that COHQ and SEAC refer to Combined Operations Headquarters and South East Asia Command (Lord Mountbatten's two major War Commands).

**Abdullah Sheikh** Leader of the National Conference Party in Kashmir State. After accession to India was appointed Prime Minister by the Maharaja of Kashmir. Member of Indian delegation to United Nations January 1948.

**Abell G E B** (later Sir George) Private Secretary to the Viceroy (PSV).

**Ali Mir Laiq** President of the Nizam's Council from November 1947.

**Amrit Kaur Rajkumari** Mahatma Gandhi's Secretary. Minister for Health in the Government of the Dominion of India.

**Auchincloss** Field Marshal Sir Claude. Commander in Chief in India until 15th August. Supreme Commander administering partition of Indian Army until 30th November 1947.

**Ayyengar Gopalaswami** Minister without Portfolio in the Government of the Dominion of India. Leader of Indian delegation to United Nations in January 1948.

**Baldev Singh** Sardar Sikh leader. Member for Defence in the Interim Government. Minister for Defence in the Government of the Dominion of India.

**Biabha C H** Member for Works, Mines and Power in the Interim Government. Minister for Commerce in the Government of the Dominion of India.

**Bhopal** The Nawab of Ruler of Bhopal State. Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes until May 1947.

**Bikaner** The Maharaja of Ruler of Bikaner State.

**Brabourne** Lord and Lady, son in law and elder Earl and Countess Mountbatten of Burma.



Bro kma Captain (S) R. V R N Personal Secretary to  
V ceroy Pri ate Sec rary to the Gov m r General of Ia  
f m 15th August 1947

11. *Chairman of the Nizam's Council*  
May 1947 to November 1947

C R refers to C R j g p lachar

E. A. Crum, Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Army, Conference Secretary,  
the Victory and the Governor General of India

**Gandhi** Mahatma Father of the Nation

G d l Dev d s M ging Editor f the *H ndusta Times*  
s n of th M h tm

G E refers to Sr Georg Abell and t Command r Nichol  
acc rding to context

Hyd b d The Nzam of R l f Hyd b d St te

General of India's Staff until December 1947

J. n. k. 1947 Sir Evan G. ... of the Punjab until 15th Aug

J h M h mm d Al (Q id-e Azam) P es dent f th  
Ind M l m League fi st Gov nor General f th D m  
of P ki t n

Kashmiri Th. M. ha. j. of R. I. r. of J. mmu and Kashmiri St.  
Krip. l. ni Ach. ry J. B. P. dent of Co. gr. 12

La q : Al Klam Gene l S cretary f th All Ind a M s  
Leag e M mber f Fin nce n th Interim G rnm

Prin Minister of th G rnmnt f th Domin n of Pakis  
L khari Lieuten t General Sir Rob General Officer C

Commanding in-Chief Southern Command India Governor of North West Frontier Province from June to 15th Aug 1947  
Commanding in-Chief Indian Army Dominion of India  
August 1947 to January 1948

*Mithal* Dr J hn Memb r for T n port and Ra l y s In  
Inter m G vernm nt M nst r for Tr sport d Ra l ways

M. V. K. Krishna High Commissioner for India in

United Kingdom from August 1947

July 1947 Secretary of the State Department Government of the Dominion of India

Mevlle Sir Eric Principal Secretary to the Viceroy  
Mohammed Ali Financial Adviser to the Military Finance

Mohammed Ali Financial Adviser in the Military Finance Department of the Government of India Member of the State Committee of the Partition Council Secretary General of

Committee of the Partition Council Secretary General of  
Dominion of Pakistan  
Manchester, Sir Walter, Constitutional Adviser to the Nizam

Monckto Sir Walter Constitutional Adviser to the Nizam  
Hydrabad

At the time of Burma Rear Adm 1 the V<sub>1</sub> count (cr at d E August 1947) la t Viceroy of Ind a 2 nd March to 14th Aug

